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ASPECTS OF THOMAS HARDY'S PICTORIALISM

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines a number of influences that seem, in combination, to have contributed to the complexity of Thomas Hardy's literary "pictorialism." For the study, which makes reference to a selection of his prose fiction and poetry, "pictorialism" is defined as "the verbal presentation of characters and scenes as if they are being viewed as works of visual art."

An architectural training, the frequenting of art galleries and museums, and a lifelong interest in the visual arts and in painting, in particular, are seen as some of the influences shaping and enriching the traditional nineteenth-century elements of Hardy's literary "pictorialism." In this connection, exploration is made of Hardy's possible debt to seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish genre painting, portrait painting, etching and Impressionism.

Underlying these influences, it is suggested, are others that can be traced to Hardy's natural disposition and to his early life in rural Dorsetshire. These, for which evidence is to be found in his autobiography, are seen as the source of distinctive elements in his "pictorialism." Some exploration is made of the nature of Hardy's artistic disposition, and of his psychological predilection for holding aloof as a spectator. The effect of this "distancing" on his narrative stance, often productive of irony, and his liking for unusual

angles of looking are also discussed as shaping influences on his "pictorialism."

In placing an emphasis on the natural qualities of Hardy's artistic disposition and on what develops into his habitual and idiosyncratic way of looking, I suggest that these are the essential forces. They shape the later influences, and, in turn, are shaped by them; and the combination produces some of the complexity of Hardy's literary "pictorialism."

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A fairly recent study, Thomas Hardy by Norman Page, has drawn attention to the uneven quality of some of Hardy's writing:

> A contrast of a different kind between the major and minor fiction is stylistic: no major novelist's language absents itself from felicity more quickly than Hardy's when the quickening impulse grows feeble or dies altogether. Even the best novels are not altogether free from lapses into ponderousness or banality, and some of the minor novels contain fine passages; but the different degree to which novels as close in time as Tess and The Well-Beloved utilize the resources of language is a matter for astonishment: the contrast between the seen and felt in one and the cerebral and mechanical in the other is very evident on the stylistic level.[1]

The "quickening impulse" and "the seen and felt" that Norman Page indicates as being at the root of Hardy's finer writing are relevant to the subject of his literary "pictorialism." By "pictorialism" I mean the verbal presentation of characters and scenes as if they are being viewed as works of visual art. It is not the purpose of this study to examine the unevenness of style in the "pictorialism"; rather, it is my thesis that various influences, in combination, can be seen to have contributed to its complexity and to the originality of some of it; but I wish to place an emphasis at the outset on the points raised by Norman Page, that is, on elements that are natural in Hardy's artistic disposition. If I may interpret the "quickening impulse" as a kind of total imaginative

involvement, then it, and the "seeing and feeling," are clearly evident in his childhood and I believe that they and their nurturing in the rural Dorsetshire of the 1840's are not only the essential shaping forces of the kinds of "pictorialism" that set Hardy apart from other "pictorial" writers, but that they are also the alembic through which his more traditional kinds of "pictorialism" were passed.

It is fairly common knowledge that The Life of Thomas Hardy by Florence Emily Hardy was, in fact, largely prepared by Hardy himself. He gives in the first few pages a brief look at his early boyhood, and some passages seem significant not only because later entries in The Life show a continuing sensitivity to similar experience, but also because there are echoes in the "pictorialism" of his prose fiction, to which I shall return in later chapters. He recounts how, as quite a small boy, he waited alone to respond to the special lighting effects on a staircase wall his father had painted Venetian red: "the evening sun shone into it, adding to its colour a great intensity for a quarter of an hour or more."[2] On those occasions he was sufficiently stirred to recite the hymn, "And now another day is gone," feeling it to be appropriate to the moment. The item is interesting; it indicates the fascination dramatic light held for him long before his pursuit of later artistic interests. Years afterwards, at the age of forty-three, he records in The Life an occasion that is reminiscent of the earlier one in its essential concerns:

> August 14. Strolling players at Dorchester in the market field. Went to Othello. A vermilion sunset fell on the

> west end of the booth, where, while the audience assembled, Cassio, in supposed Venetian costume, was lounging and smoking in the red light at the bottom of the van-steps behind the theatre: Othello also lounging in the same sunlight on the grass by the stage door, and touching up the black of his face.[3]

Hardy refers very briefly to the "wide, brilliantly white chimney-corner, in his child-time such a feature of the sitting room. . . ." In an age of simple lamps and candles, the light from this kind of fireplace would throw splendid shadows, profiles perhaps, upon the walls. If in later times Hardy notes often the fall of shadows, the silhouettes, and the black profiles, such observations would seem to be striking familiar chords from the childhood life of Higher Bockhampton when he was most susceptible to the drama of lighting effects. In this connection it would be well to bring the early 1840's to life for a moment and to see it as Hardy probably did. In the absence of developed streets, the only lighting after sunset would be the illuminated rectangles of the uncovered windows of the "few scattered dwellings." Any figure moving against the window would appear in silhouette. So, too, would a person throwing open the door at night appear in outline against the interior glow. Moonlight at its best would not be reduced by the myriad city lights. It would, with the stars, create a world of incredible beauty for a child responsive to the degree that Hardy was. He gives numerous little jottings in the later years that indicate his continuing sensitivity to the play of light. Perhaps one will suffice to illustrate. When he was thirty-nine years old, he returned to Dorchester, his brother

meeting him at the station. Together, the wagonette pulled by their father's horse, Bob, they drove through bitter sleet and snow. Hardy records:

> Wind on Fordington Moor cut up my sleeves and round my wrists--even up to my elbows. The light of the lamp at the bottom of the town shone on the reins in Henry's hands, and showed them glistening with ice. Bob's hindpart was a mere grey arch; his foreparts invisible.[4]

These glimpses of Hardy in his most impressionable years storing up vivid and often dramatic images with a naturally acute eye are but a few of those offered in the opening pages of The Life. One further deserves attention, though, because it seems possible that it contributes to Hardy's memory for figures lit by or placed against an orange or red light:

> When still a small boy he was taken by his father to witness the burning in effigy of the Pope and Cardinal Wiseman in the old Roman Amphitheatre at Dorchester during the No-Popery Riots. The sight to young Hardy was most lurid, and he never forgot it; and when the cowl of one of the monks in the ghastly procession blew aside and revealed the features of one of his father's workmen his bewilderment was great.[5]

This account glosses over the emotional involvement a child of Hardy's disposition must surely have experienced. He would be moving in crowds, with which he was not familiar; it was probably dusk to present the spectacle at its best; the No-Popery Riots would have generated an excitement among the adults which the responsive child would sense; the effigies would stand or hang, black against the red of the fire; there would be the smell, the noise, the hint of violence--a hundred impressions of shadows, silhouettes, roaring flames and colours. The extent of his horror is perhaps to be guessed at in his bewilderment as the familiar face beneath the cowl was

revealed; it had not been a make-believe for him.

The early pages of The Life provide insights of another kind that have possible bearing on Hardy's "pictorialism." He records that his home was in a "lonely and silent spot" and when he transferred to a more advanced school, he had, therefore, a walk of several miles. He describes how he loved to be alone, how his fellows' friendly offers to accompany him on his journey home were almost "burdensome" at times. The admission is interesting in its emphasis on another important aspect of his nature, his preference for a solitude. The same preference can be detected in an episode from about his sixth year:

> One event of this date or a little later stood out, he used to say, more distinctly than any. He was lying on his back in the sun thinking how useless he was, and covered his face with his straw hat. The sun's rays streamed through the interstices of the straw, the lining having disappeared. Reflecting on his experiences of the world so far as he had got, he came to the conclusion that he did not wish to grow up. Other boys were always talking of when they would be men; he did not want at all to be a man, or to possess things, but to remain as he was, in the same spot, and to know no more people than he already knew (about half a dozen).[6]

In the gesture of withdrawal signified by the pulling of the hat over the face, Hillis Miller traces the unmistakable stance of detached watchfulness[7] that characterizes Hardy's prose fiction and many of his poems. Whatever the child's "experiences of the world" had been, one can surmise only that he felt intensely and perhaps painfully, and that he involuntarily chose "to keep his distance," safely viewing life from the outside--a solitary watcher. It seems likely that this way of regarding the world offered him a satisfactory

protection or means of controlling what he describes as his "ecstatic temperament," and that it became a habitual turn of mind.

Hardy's intensity of feeling was not just a matter of visual response. He was, he says, "extraordinarily sensitive to music" and would dance alone as a small child to the strains of his father's violin, trying to hide the tears that came spontaneously. Indeed, his total account of his childhood reveals creative leanings in a number of directions. He played the violin quite skilfully himself; he loved dancing; and he had a feeling for drama that moved him to act out little episodes in his child play. It was out of these richly creative possibilities and imaginative beginnings of the formative years that Hardy moved into manhood.

What was begun in childhood remained, shaped by later-developing artistic pursuits and at the same time shaping them. An architectural training fostered an already sharply appreciative eye, and a move to London brought him access to theatre, opera, and art galleries. He wrote poetry but was not successful in publishing it; nevertheless, he records,

> he did not by any means abandon verse, which he wrote constantly, but kept private, through the years 1866 and most of 1867, resolving to send no more to magazines whose editors probably did not know good poetry from bad, and forming meanwhile the quixotic opinion that, as in verse was concentrated the essence of all imaginative and emotional literature, to read verse and nothing else was the shortest way to the fountain-head of such, for one who had not a great deal of spare time.[8]

It seems important to grasp, in any study of Hardy's "pictorialism," the multitude of possible sources that fed

his eyes and his imagination. If his naturally sensitive looking had regarded in childhood the quiet, unpopulated landscapes of Dorset in all seasons and in all lights, it now surfeited on the riotous fare of London:

> the metropolis into which he had plunged at this date [1862] differed greatly from the London of even a short time after. It was the London of Dickens and Thackeray, and Evan's supper-rooms were still in existence. . . . The Cider Cellars and the Coal Hole were still flourishing, with "Judge and Jury" mock trials. . . . Hungerford Market was still in being. . . . There was no Thames Embankment. . . . Holborn Hill was still a steep and noisy thoroughfare which almost broke the legs of the slipping horses and. . . . The Underground Railway was just in its infancy. . . .[9]

In this period of his architectural work in London, he began also a more systematic study of art:

> His interest in painting led him to devote for many months, on every day that the National Gallery was open, twenty minutes after lunch to an inspection of the masters hung there, confining his attention to a single master on each visit, and forbidding his eyes to stray to any other. He went there from sheer liking, and not with any practical object. . . .[10]

His reference to "any practical object" is in keeping with what he records of the order in which he pursued various interests. Prose fiction was not really in his mind at the time of these early gallery visits of 1865. He did consider writing a play in blank verse about this time, but nothing came of it; and it was not until 1867 after considerable play-going and visits to art galleries that "under the stress of necessity he had set about a kind of literature in which he had hitherto taken but little interest--prose fiction. . . ."[11] "Pictorialism" at the time Hardy began his novelist's career was still at its height. Mario Praz describes how

> . . . between 1830 and 1860 English painting, with its emphasis on subject, on the moral to be inculcated, the story to be told, was a branch almost of literature, rather than of painting. The public demanded that a picture should contain a moral, an anecdote. . . . Painters took great pains to load their pictures with meaning and suggestion, story-tellers to convey the living image of things by means of minute, "picturesque" descriptiveness. Ut pictoria poesis had become the golden rule--more than it ever had been, more than it ever was to be again--of nineteenth-century narrative literature.[12]

Indirectly, Hardy's reading of such novelists as Scott[13] and Dickens--the latter of whom he heard read in person several times in 1867--would have brought him in contact with this strong tradition but there is no real evidence that he consciously set out to apply the "golden rule" of ut pictura poesis.[14] He does comment, however, when he is considerably older:

> But probably few literary critics discern the solidarity of all the arts [my italics]. Curiously enough Hardy himself dwelt upon it in a poem that seems to have been little understood, though the subject is of such interest. It is called "Rome: The Vatican: Sala delle Muse"; in which a sort of composite Muse addresses him:
>
> 'Be not perturbed,' said she. 'Though apart in fame,
> I and my sisters are one.'[15]

Superficially, the "solidarity of all the arts" and "I and my sisters are one" have ut pictura poesis overtones, but the full context of his discussion on that occasion reveals that he was, in fact, simply reflecting a little defensively on the question of poetry and criticism. Although he had been writing poetry since he was a young man in the early 1860's, his first published volume of verse, Wessex Poems, did not appear until 1898, and its appearance was regarded with less favour by critics who thought Hardy had unwisely turned, after a

lifetime of prose fiction, to "another vehicle of expression." Pursuing his reflections on his poetry, Hardy referred to a parallel that he had discovered between architecture and poetry, noting the fact of "both arts, unlike some others, having to carry a rational content inside their artistic form."[16]

What his comment on the arts amounts to in this particular instance is that, broadly speaking, he saw similarities in the underlying principles of some arts. This impression is borne out by a passage in his essay, "The Profitable Reading of Fiction," where his attention dwelt on principles of composition in the novel and in the visual arts; but again the parallel is of the most general kind. He regretted how few of the reading public might consider, in their hasty perusal of a number of novels,

> that, to a masterpiece in story there appertains a beauty of shape, no less than to a masterpiece in pictorial or plastic art, capable of giving to the trained mind an equal pleasure.[17]

His interest in method and the "artfulness" of art is very often evident in the autobiography. He recorded in 1917, for example: "I find I wrote in 1888 that 'Art is concerned with seemings only' which is true." Another example from 1889 shows his reflection on artistic emphasis:

> Art is a disproportioning--(i.e. distorting, throwing out of proportion)--of realities, to show more clearly the features that matter in those realities, which if merely copied or reported inventorially, might possibly be overlooked. Hence "realism" is not Art.[18]

As interesting as these general reflections are for the information they give on Hardy's constant self-teaching, they

do not indicate whether he held any ut pictura poesis theories. It is likely, therefore, that his abundant "pictorialism" is not part of any conscious undertaking.

In the following chapters I propose to discuss several influences that seem productive of that "pictorialism" in Hardy, illustrating them from a selection of his short stories, novels, and poems. I hope to justify my conviction that what is distinctive in Hardy's "pictorialism" springs from later influences, but is also shaped by essential characteristics in the man himself, some of which I have emphasized in their embryonic form in his childhood.

CHAPTER II

PICTORIAL ASPECTS: GENRE PAINTING AND LANDSCAPE PAINTING

Among the more apparent kinds of "pictorialism" in Hardy is the use of words clearly associated with art. He is not alone in this kind of usage, however, and the tradition can be seen in many a critical review of the time. "Full of good painting," and "a striking picture" are two such comments made of Trollope's novels.[19] The Spectator of 1891 praises Tess of the d'Urbervilles, noting with what "absolute completeness that portrait is painted for us."[20] Writers, according to their reviewers, are presenting "sketches," or "carefully executed paintings," or realistic "pictures." The incidence of this kind of usage in Hardy is not hard to find, but it is not exactly the full extent of his "art" vocabulary. He brings to the tradition the combination of his naturally acute visual powers and his architectural awareness, both extended and exercised by his habitual visits to art galleries. He draws attention to "perspective," "plane," "curve," "line," and "chromatic effect."[21] A night before a storm in Far From the Madding Crowd shows fields "tinged in monochrome, as if beheld through stained glass" (Chapter 36). Giles, in The Woodlanders, sees the mediaeval buildings of the town as "having the linear distinctness of architectural drawings" (Chapter 5); and Cytherea in Desperate Remedies, watching her father at work from a distance, sees him and his assistants

on the church-steeple platform as an "illuminated miniature" (Chapter 1). Many such apt usages in Hardy show the exactness with which he visualizes. In The Life under the date December 7th, 1886, Hardy notes: "The landscape has turned from a painting to an engraving." In the two art-terms he concentrates a wealth of observation, the paling or total withdrawal of colour, the sharper outlines, possibly snow and gradations from white to black, but at least the hint of frosty hardness linked with the metal plate and the steel engraver of an etching process. It is a more successful communication deriving from his art awareness than one cited by Norman Page: "who but Hardy would have described a woman's seductive posture on a couch as a 'cyma-recta curve'?"[22]

Another more superficial kind of "pictorialism" in Hardy's prose fiction is his naming of a specific artist, painter or sculptor, to enhance or to convey his comparison. Critical reviews of the time very frequently referred to seventeenth-century Dutch or Flemish painters or to followers of that school. Desperate Remedies was, in fact, reviewed in those terms by Horace Moule in the Saturday Review. He commended the cider-making scene and found it to be "the same sort of thing in written sentences that a clear fresh country piece of Hobbema's is in art."[23] The Spectator review of the same novel thought the representation of the village rustics pleasantly reminiscent of "paintings of Wilkie and still more perhaps of those of Teniers, etc."[24] Dickens was called "the literary Teniers of the metropolis."[25] It was an accepted

manner of speaking; but Hardy's comparisons with the works of artists extend far beyond the rather well known. Generally, the allusions scarcely present problems for the reader not so well acquainted with works by Kneller, Lely, Nollekens, Wouwermans, Douw, and so on. He can grasp from the context, or the extended description, what is intended. From A Pair of Blue Eyes, Hardy's third novel, in which at least ten artists are named, comes the following example:

> Elfride had as her own the thoughtfulness which appears in the face of the Madonna della Sedia, without its rapture: the warmth and spirit of the type of woman's feature most common to the beauties--mortal and immortal--of Rubens, with their insistent fleshiness. The characteristic expression of the female faces of Correggio--that of the yearning human thoughts that lie too deep for tears--was hers sometimes, but seldom under ordinary conditions. (Chapter 1)

It has been suggested that Hardy perhaps made the references to meet his own need to appear cultured;[26] or perhaps it was simply to provide the kind of allusion he felt appropriate for his upper-class readership. Horace Moule was well known to Hardy and from him and his other literary friend, Hooper Tolbort, Hardy may possibly have gathered the kind of phrasing that seemed acceptable. He went to some lengths to acquire knowledge of paintings, and his study of pictures at the National Gallery in London and at the South Kensington Museum--now called the Victoria and Alberta--in those early years before he took up prose fiction gave him a store of references from which he could draw. Among his personal writings, he left a Schools of Painting notebook. It is his earliest extant notebook, dated 1863, and it indicates,

incidentally, his diligent self-teaching. Under the headings of various schools of painting, he lists the names of artists. Richard Taylor says of the book that it seems not to be a collection of lecture notes, for the entries are precise, neatly ordered, the spelling is consistently correct, and so on. The suggestion is made that his source was some guide-book.[27] This may have been the case, for the arrangement follows the different groupings typical in a gallery or museum; on the other hand, he may have had access to a museum catalogue of the inventorial kind that carries engravings of each item,[28] and indicates in an appendix the school to which a painter belongs, frequently accompanied by a comprehensive description of the work. A Wallace Collection catalogue gives, for example, the following typical piece in the detailed information for a Greuze painting:

> A young woman, of a fair complexion, and a countenance expressive of anxiety; she is seen nearly in profile, having light hair, turned back on her forehead and bound with a blue riband; her dress is simply composed of a loose white morning gown, and muslin scarf round her neck.[29]

Indeed, the passage is not unlike Hardy's "portraits" on occasion, and raises the interesting question of his debt to this style of writing. In the third chapter of A Pair of Blue Eyes, for example, Elfride is described:

> The profile is seen of a young woman in a pale gray silk dress with trimmings of swan's-down, and opening up from a point in front, like a waistcoat without a shirt; the cool colour contrasting admirably with the warm bloom of her neck and face. (Chapter 3)

The writer certainly seems to be looking at an actual picture--but that is to anticipate a later chapter.

It might be well to stress at this point the sheer volume of Hardy's exploration of art which begins with those visits to the National Gallery and to the South Kensington Museum collections in the early 1860's and continues throughout most of his life. His honeymoon in France in 1874 would probably have brought him in touch with some of the masterpieces on view in Paris at that time. In 1876 visits to Rotterdam, The Hague, Cologne, Bonn, and Brussels, provided him with opportunities to see other collections. The Life records his visit to the Louvre in 1882 and his note-taking there. He had a chance to see the treasures of Genoa, Pisa, Florence, Rome and Venice on his Italian tour of 1887. The following year he again visited France. Paintings alone were not the centre of these visits; his interests embraced architecture, statuary, and stained-glass, all richly represented in the older European cities. One of the most frequent entries in his autobiography refers to his Royal Academy attendances, regular occurrences from at least 1870 until his last visit in 1919 at the end of the war. Beyond these opportunities to keep up-to-date with art trends, there were also his visits to provincial towns. Glasgow, Edinburgh, Durham, York, Liverpool, Scarborough, Cambridge, Oxford, Bath and Bristol are among the towns Hardy travelled to, and in each one, at the time he would have been there, art galleries or museums were open to the public. Some of the towns possess further treasures in their universities and cathedrals. A number of the towns have special collections

bequeathed by wealthy people; such is the Fitzwilliam Bequest to Cambridge University in 1816, or the Walker Collection of Liverpool, rich in the works of European masters.

In London itself there were, of course, many art centres beyond the National Gallery and the Academy. The Wallace Collection, not actually bequeathed to the nation until 1894, lent large groups of paintings for exhibitions. One in particular drew 5,000,000 people to the Bethnal Green Museum--a branch of the South Kensington museum--between 1872 and 1875. Since Hardy was in London in 1872, he very probably attended and would have enjoyed, among other things, the twenty-two Greuze paintings on loan.

He knew several artists personally, including Frith, Burne-Jones and Alma-Tadema and he records in The Life his attendance at a surprisingly large number of dinners and social gatherings where the season's exhibitions and notable new paintings might very well have become the topic of conversations. Besides personal contacts, there was his reading of periodicals and reviews. His involvement with art during his life, looked at in its totality, is an impressive record indeed.

Although perhaps the immersion in art contributed aspects of his "pictorialism" that are superficial, some of his finer "pictorial" qualities derive from this enriching of his acute visual memory.

The literary tradition into which Hardy moved when he took up prose fiction possessed "pictorial" aspects that Mario

Praz saw "better accounted for by reference to seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting than to influences within the literary tradition itself.[30] The genre painting, to use the term in its nineteenth-century meaning, has a long history leading back to the earliest paintings and offers a contrast to the more limiting iconographical and formal painting of the classical tradition, since it gives the artist freedom to paint unspecified and generalized subjects. Munro and Rudorff suggest that the Calvinistic doctrine that "Man should not paint or carve anything except what he can see around him, so that God's majesty may not be corrupted by fantasies" directed the Dutch artists' attention to their immediate surroundings, to portraits of notables, and to landscapes of the placid Dutch countryside.[31] Whatever the sources of the genre school, the seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish artists produced great numbers of works of this kind and were able to dominate the English market.[32] The accessibility of these paintings and their emphasis on contemporary life made them extremely popular, and frequently the painters spent short periods in England painting for specific clients. Even after the beginning of the novelistic tradition in the first half of the eighteenth century, the paintings from The Netherlands continued to find their way to England. At the time of the French Revolution of 1789, for example, some Dutch genre paintings were bought from the homes of dispossessed aristocrats. Later, the Angerstein Collection, containing Cuyp, Rembrandt, Rubens, and Van Dyck was

purchased in 1824 and formed the nucleus on which the National Gallery was begun. Still later, in the 1870's, the collections of Sir Robert Peel and Wynn Ellis added more Cuyp, de Hoogh, Hobbema and Rubens. There was, in short, a goodly sampling available, from the seventeenth century on, to affect the novelistic tradition.

Tracing the nineteenth-century literary debt to seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish painting involves recognition of various strands in the genre painting. There is the "everyday scene," often presenting an interior or a courtyard where domestic life is depicted. In some typical paintings kitchen-work proceeds, and common utensils, tabby-cats, and discarded slippers feature among the details. Paintings by Vermeer especially and Pieter de Hoogh are often of this kind and have an objective "realism" about them. The titles of such pictures indicate their everyday concerns: "A Woman Peeling Apples," "Buying Fish," and "An Old Woman Asleep" speak for themselves. Another branch of the genre painting concentrates on town and street scenes, and Jacob Vrel's work provides find examples. It is in Vrel's fondness for humble towns that Mario Praz sees links with Dickens' settings in the London slums.[33] In A. Ostade's paintings can be found an emphasis on peasant groups often pleasantly at ease, with friendly faces and manners. They have a peacefulness not found in Jan Steen's paintings of taverns and dissolute families, which are coarser, more boisterous, and often comic. These works by Steen typify yet another genre

strand that can be followed in later trends in nineteenth-century literature. Included in some of his pictures are distinctly symbolic elements; for example, in "Dissolute Family" a monkey meddles with papers on the floor and a huge peacock's feather is displayed on the table, and these are "emblems taken bodily from popular engravings of the vices." Hogarth adopts this kind of moralistic "comment" in his series, Marriage à la Mode, giving in the "Breakfast" a clock formed of "a hybrid hotchpotch" of things, an ill assortment suggestive of the marriage itself.[34]

Without exhausting, by any means, all the aspects of Dutch genre painting, it can be seen that in Hogarth and his Dutch forerunners, there are elements also found in the novelistic traditions of England. Fielding's humorous characters, in their debt to Hogarth, and Dickens' portrayal of the realities of the London slums are typical of the strands that lead back to the genre paintings. Hardy's knowledge of the Dutch and Flemish works is certain from his National Gallery and museum visits and from his apt references to them in his novels; but a secondary source of influence on his writing might possibly have come indirectly from his own reading.[35] A survey of his "pictorialism" must, of course, recognize these influences, but it is important to remember also those aspects of Hardy's early life referred to in the introduction. It would seem very possible, given his sensitive and keen observation powers, that his first viewing of many Dutch and Flemish paintings struck familiar chords in

his recent memories of rural life. More than this, the painters' concerns for colour, lighting, shadows, contrasts, shape, and so on, are the very ones, because of their visual emphasis, that Hardy delighted in. He was already keenly appreciative of these features and it is hard to believe that he did not experience some excitement when he saw them "brought to life" again and used effectively and often dramatically in the canvases before him.

In all his prose fiction, examples of links with the seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish schools of painting can be found. The parallel with works depicting the everyday labours of the humble are perhaps nowhere better shown than in The Woodlanders. An early glimpse of Marty shows her "seated on a willow chair, and busily working by the light of the fire." The details draw attention to "a bill-hook in one hand and a leather glove much too large for her on the other," to her leather apron, to the raw material at the left of her feet and the wooden chips to the right. Beside her a brass candlestick stands "on a little round table curiously formed of an old coffin-stool, with a deal top nailed on, the white surface of the latter contrasting oddly with the black carved oak . . ." (Chapter 2). The realistic, genre-painting features of the Dutch examples are here; but it is not a mere cataloguing of detail, or even just a rather full description. "Pictorialism" involves a concern for the things a painter would consider. The details are positioned for the reader; and when the central focus has been caught, the reader is

drawn to details he might have missed if he were looking at the "picture": the candlestick and the nailing-on of the deal table-top. The total effect is of a control that has shaped the elements of the visible scene into a painterly composition. The details of Gerard Dou's work, "A Hermit," a painting by Vermeer, or by Pieter de Hoogh show precisely this kind of effect. Netscher's "The Lace-Maker" is also reminiscent of this treatment. Such clearly composed views of workfolk, detailing their garb, postures, expressions, and the sources of lighting on the whole grouping, spring to the notice in a number of Hardy's novels. In Far From the Madding Crowd there are the sheep-shearers in the great barn; the sheep-washing in progress; Bathsheba about to hive the bees; and Oak in his shepherd hut. Tess of the d'Urbervilles offers more such "composed" groupings of workers both in dairy and field; and Mr. Penny in Under the Greenwood Tree appears at his boot-mending, his spectacles flashing at the lift of his face to the light. A second example worth closer examination is to be found in the opening chapter of The Mayor of Casterbridge. The inside of the "furmity booth" presents the folk "seated at the long narrow tables that ran down the tent on each side." Within this "composing" arrangement the central figure of the furmity-woman herself stands, white-aproned, at a fire and stirring the contents of a shiny-rimmed pot while, beside her, utensils are "on a white-clothed table of boards and trestles. . . ." Again the painter's care for arrangement is obvious and the Dutch genre-painting

aspect of emphasis on everyday subject-matter and detail is clear. It is not difficult to see similarities between Jan Steen's "The Christening Feast"[36] and the "furmity tent," both having the white-aproned woman and the folk seated lengthwise. This kind of arrangement for interior scenes is echoed quite often in the Dutch-peasant genre paintings.

"Kind of arrangement" is a significant phrase here, for it embraces other compositional concerns very frequently to be found in these early paintings and also in Hardy's "pictorialism." Christopher Wright has pointed out that "it was a common conceit of Dutch painters to place their figures either at a window or leaning out of it";[37] and whether Hardy was influenced directly by his contact with Dutch pictures, by his architectural training, by the work of sculptors like John Michael Rysbrack on tomb designs within arched niches, or by a more general understanding that composing a picture invites this kind of arrangement, the fact remains that as he visualizes, he frequently organizes by a "framing" device.[38] Grace, in The Woodlanders, is seen at the bedroom window lighting candles, "her right hand elevating the taper, her left hand on her bosom, her face thoughtfully fixed on each wick as it kindled. . ." (Chapter 7). The figure is posed in painterly fashion and the window "frames" and focuses attention on the whole. Bathsheba in Far From the Madding Crowd is thus depicted on the occasion of Boldwood's visit: "She stood up in the window-opening, facing the men, the candles behind her, Gabriel on her right hand, immediately

outside the sash frame" (Chapter 23). The examples of this kind of "framing" are not hard to find in Hardy's novels: Sue in Jude the Obscure ("At Shaston," Chapter 1); Fancy Day in Under the Greenwood Tree (Chapter 5); and Anne in The Trumpet Major (Chapter 21), are all seen briefly in this way. Again, however, it would be well to recall his childhood in rural Dorset. It seems quite possible that the Dutch "conceit" simply fostered what his own eyes and experience had led him to. Lighted windows attract attention in dark rural areas, and a figure seen at such a window becomes a focal point in an otherwise featureless landscape.

Hardy's neat underlining in his Schools of Painting notebook, and his own effective little sketches, suggest a nature that derives satisfaction and pleasure from controlling separate parts. His love of rhythm, and of the harmony of music, even the sense of fitness he felt in reciting a particular hymn to accompany a vivid lighting effect--all these seem to point to his natural tendency to create by synthetizing and to derive satisfaction from an arrangement that relates things. Something of that control is present in the Dutch interior paintings. There is a cool orderliness as an open door frames the view to yet more cool rooms and even, sometimes, glimpses of rooms beyond rooms, as in Pieter de Hoogh's "The Courtyard of a House in Delft." The same artist's "A Boy Bringing Pomegranates"--another of the paintings included in the Bethnal Green Exhibition--is also an excellent example of this; by means of three doors or arched ways, both the bending

figure of the woman and that of the child selling fruit are brought into focus, while a window to the right gives a lesser view into a courtyard. Vermeer's work has a similar "ordering" emphasis on windows and doors. Hardy, in his architectural training, would probably have studied the effectiveness of arches as a device and would, no doubt, have feasted his eyes in his travels on manifestations of the same device in different countries and from different periods of man's history. Whether he consciously recognized in the paintings he saw that the artists were indebted to this or that influence, there is no specific evidence; but it was probably to a sense of this kind of similarity in underlying principles that he referred in his phrase, "the solidarity of the arts."

An excellent example of the controlling device of doors used to focus attention on a figure beyond, in the true "Dutch manner," is to be found in The Woodlanders, where Giles' preparations for his Christmas party are under way and he stands feeding wood to the oven fire,

> the heat shining out upon his streaming face and making his eyes like furnaces . . . while Creedle, having ranged the pastry dishes in a row on the table till the oven should be ready, was pressing out the crust of a final apple pie with a rolling pin. A great pot boiled on the fire; and through the open door of the back kitchen a boy was seen seated on the fender, emptying the snuffers and scouring the candle-sticks, a row of the latter standing upside down on the hob to melt out the grease. (Chapter 9)

In its concerns with Creedle's domestic activities, with details of humble utensils, with a view through a door to focus attention on a figure beyond, and with the lighting on

Giles' face, this passage combines many of the characteristics of the typical Dutch or Flemish genre painting.

Hardy, it will be remembered, was particularly responsive to the effects of light and the way it could transform dramatically. In the Dutch and Flemish masters of the seventeenth century the paintings of Rembrandt especially and of Schalcken would have strengthened his memory of how lighting can delight and shape and transform as it falls. Rembrandt, influenced as many were by the work of Caravaggio, adopted something of his melodramatic chiaroscuro, and it is of Rembrandt and his followers that the reader may well be reminded in some of Hardy's "pictorialism." In Far From the Madding Crowd, when Troy's spur is entangled in the hem of Bathsheba's gown, the placing of the lantern brings the two into a composition dramatically caught against the blackness of the night around them:

> . . . the lantern standing on the ground betwixt them threw the gleam from its open side among the fir-tree needles and the blades of long damp grass with the effect of a large glowworm. It radiated upwards into their faces, and sent over half the plantation gigantic shadows of both man and woman, each dusky shape becoming distorted and mangled upon the tree-trunks till it wasted to nothing. (Chapter 24)

The incident is clearly visualized and composed in terms of dramatic lighting. Far From the Madding Crowd, in fact, offers very many examples of dramatic and melodramatic chiaroscuro used with a painter's concern for its special focusing qualities. A sampling of them presents Oak stepping suddenly into his doorway illuminated by the lantern he carries (Chapter 2); Boldwood appearing in a rectangle of

blazing light as he waits for Bathsheba to come with her answer (Chapter 53); Oak's dog starkly silhouetted against a dawn sky, the sole cause of Oak's financial disaster (Chapter 5); the malthouse illuminated by the kiln mouth (Chapter 8); and the tent interior with specifically-mentioned Rembrandt effects as light filters through holes in the canvas from an autumn sun (Chapter 50). Hardy's first published novel, Desperate Remedies (1871), does not show the same handling of light, although one might expect it to since Hardy would have seen the Rembrandt and Rubens paintings, and others of the same influence, in his gallery visits in the 1860's. It is interesting to speculate here whether there was a renewed attention to chiaroscuro by contact with the ten Rembrandt paintings, seven or eight Rubens, and others of the same kind, especially Schalcken's work, "A Girl Threading a Needle by Candlelight," all exhibited from the Wallace collection in that Bethnal Green loan of 1872-5. Hardy was in London, working, in 1872, and visiting there from June 9th-20th, 1873. In the late summer of 1873 he began to write Far From the Madding Crowd.[39] The Bethnal Green Exhibition was massive and not confined to the Dutch school, so that Hardy would also have seen Raoux, who used chiaroscuro strongly, inspired by Rembrandt and Schalcken; and Murillo, of the Spanish school, another very much influenced to use chiaroscuro in the style of Caravaggio.

Desperate Remedies certainly shows some concern with "pictorial" lighting effects, but lacks the sheer volume of

melodramatic instances where intense emotion often coincides with Hardy's use of chiaroscuro as in Far From the Madding Crowd. In the earlier novel, Hardy's childhood experiences seem to be the main source of influence governing the two major instances where light is used "pictorially":

> The direct blaze of the afternoon sun, partly refracted through the crimson curtains of the window, and heightened by reflections from the crimson-flock paper which covered the walls, and a carpet on the floor of the same tint, shone with a burning glow round the form of a lady standing close to Cytherea's front with the door in her hand. The stranger appeared . . . like a tall black figure standing in the midst of fire. (Chapter 4)

The combination of his childhood response to the sunset on the Venetian-red walls in his home and his possible memories of a lurid burning-in-effigy seems to be central to the passage. Similarly, his memories of the "wide, brilliantly white chimney corner . . . such a feature of the sitting room" seem to lie beneath the domesticity of the following passage:

> Two recesses--one on the right, one on the left hand--were cut in the inside of the fireplace, and here they sat down facing each other, on benches fitted to the recesses, the fire glowing on the hearth between their feet. Its ruddy light shone on the underslopes of their faces, and spread out over the floor of the room with the low horizontality of the setting sun, giving to every grain of sand and tumour in the paving a long shadow towards the door. (Chapter 15)

The artistic concerns of focusing figures and objects by "framing," positioning, posing, or chiaroscuro are not, of course, limited to one strand only in the Dutch and Flemish genre paintings; these are important considerations for all artists, but in the paintings dealing with single figures at work, or caught in poses, or with scenes presenting only very

small groups united by some common interest, these principles of composition come more obviously into play. In those paintings where larger gatherings are depicted, the emphasis is often more upon attitudes struck, expressions held, and the patterning of the figures in some related whole. Hogarth's "Orgies" from the "Rake's Progress" series in the Dutch tradition, and later, Thomas Rowlandson's caricatures like "The Hazard Room," a frantic gambling scene, are of this kind. Because of the riot of action, the eye must spend time first on this figure, then on those two, that woman, this man, the litter, the servants, the liaisons and so on. Paintings by A. Ostade, Brouwer, and Jan Steen are clearly forerunners and Hardy would have seen them; but the genre paintings themselves were probably not the only influence on Hardy here, for the nineteenth-century novelistic tradition reveals its debt to Hogarth and his forerunners also. Mario Praz points to similarities in Thackeray's work, for example, when he considers the "little tea-table scenes" of Pendennis.[40] These urbanized and polite gatherings require the reader to pause and take note of this attitude and that expression in much the same way as one approaches a genre painting. In Hardy's novels, where he offers a glimpse of a larger gathering, it is in a manner closer to the Dutch realistic genre. Festus in The Trumpet-Major[41] is caught wide awake and central to the drunkenness around him. The reader is led to individual postures: the figure attempting to make a speech, the sleepy ones, and the soldier in a maudlin state. The detailing of

the merrymaking centres also on the neglected candles and the smoky yellow lighting. Even closer to the Dutch paintings because of the rustic nature of the characters is the revelry in Far From the Madding Crowd:

> The candles suspended among the evergreens had burnt down to their sockets, and in some cases the leaves tied about them were scorched. Many of the lights had quite gone out, others smoked . . . grease dropping from them upon the floor. Here, under the table, and leaning against forms and chairs in every conceivable attitude except the perpendicular, were the wretched persons of all the work-folk, the hair of their heads at such low levels being suggestive of mops and brooms. In the midst of these shone red and distinct the figure of Sergeant Troy, leaning back in a chair. Coggan was on his back, with his mouth open. . . . Joseph Poorgrass was curled round in the fashion of a hedgehog, apparently in attempts to present the least possible portion of his surface to the air; and behind him was dimly visible an unimportant remnant of William Smallbury. The glasses and cups still stood upon the table, a water-jug being overturned, from which a small rill, after tracing its course with marvellous precision down the centre of the long table, fell into the neck of the unconscious Mark Clark. . . . (Chapter 36)

An artistic eye has drawn attention in this passage to the focal spot in the bright red of Troy's uniform and to the odd little realistic detail of a partially-hidden figure. The precise shapes of the bodies' positions as they lie demand of the reader that he "see" each in turn. So close are the similarities to the genre painting here that one is tempted to say that if no such picture exists, then it ought to.

Among Hardy's poems only a few offer glimpses of the kind to be found in genre paintings. A single stanza in "Last Look Round St. Martin's Fair" presents the men "with long cord-waistcoats in brown monochrome" driving back to the Great Forest the "unsold heathcroppers"; and "A Sheep Fair"

centres on a dismal work-scene by the sheep-pens, as in torrential rain "the auctioneer wrings out his beard," and the shepherds lean wetly against the rails. The dogs, the buyers, the sheep become in turn the focus of attention. "Throwing a Tree" follows a series of actions, any one of which might form a painting; but perhaps the second stanza provides the best "picture" as Job and Ike with "jackets doffed . . . swing axes and chop away just above ground." The chips lie about and show white in contrast to the moss and the fallen leaves, and the "eye" is drawn to the deep gash growing in the tree's bark. In "No Buyers" the "load of brushes and baskets and cradles and chairs" receives the first attention before the "eye" is directed to the exact position of the man, one yard in front of his "whiteybrown pony's nose," and to the white-aproned woman beside him. The whole forms a composition where the attitudes of even the horse must be "read" to grasp the dreary lack of success of these hawkers.

As well as concentrating on day-to-day life for their subject matter, the Dutch and Flemish painters of the seventeenth century turned also to landscapes and seascapes of the kind around them everywhere. Many of their works portray the low, flat, and uneventful scene as it is transformed by sky light and colour of exceptional quality. Outstanding for this particular characteristic is Cuyp, who was much loved in England for his amber-coloured warmth. Rubens, too, in his "Rainbow Landscape" bathes miles of softly-wooded countryside in golden light. Nineteenth-century novelists were as much

affected by the subject-matter of these kinds of paintings as they were by the domestic-interior genre paintings. Trollope described landscapes of the Dutch kind, and George Eliot, in her diary, refers to the transformation of an ugly landscape to beauty by the action of evening light after the manner of the Dutch painter.[42] It was not only from the Dutch landscape painters, however, that the writers seemed to draw inspiration. In the eighteenth century, English water-colour painting developed and was influenced by the Dutch works and by the travel then available to the wealthy; and in the later part of the century the cult of the "picturesque" grew. Although Alexander Cozens' book A New Method of assisting the Invention in Drawing Original Compositions of Landscape, probably published in 1785, virtually disappeared in the nineteenth century, its appearance in the late eighteenth century indicates the interest that existed in landscape drawing and painting at that time. Other famous exponents were Paul Sandby, Thomas Girtin, and Amos Green; and along with counterparts such as Peter De Wint, Copley Fielding, and John Linnell, among others, they formed a strong body of influence. Their works were often to be seen in the provincial galleries, in the Victoria and Albert Museum and at the Royal Academy, as well as in book illustrations in the nineteenth century.

This whole aspect of painting, both directly and indirectly, influenced Hardy's writing. Alastair Smart draws attention to a "brooding darkness" in the portrayal of Egdon

Heath that is reminiscent of the landscapes of Ruisdael and Rembrandt,[43] and the reader of a number of Hardy novels will be able to find other parallels suggesting the influence of painters. Some of the descriptions in Tess of the d'Urbervilles, for example, have the golden glow of a Rubens; others have the pastoral quality of a John Linnell water-colour with emphasis on the harvest landscape; and Tess's view of a herd of cows on a plain, Hardy specifically likens to a "canvas by Van Alsloot or Sallaert with Burghers" and so stresses how distant and very small they were from Tess's vantage point. A study of many Dutch landscapes and of the English ones brings a familiarity with typical features: the mill, the castle or house, the winding river or road or path, animals frequently dotting the hillsides, and shining expanses of pools where horses or cattle stand. This kind of landscape is found in Hardy's novels but with a notable difference. Anne's view in Chapter 1 of The Trumpet Major, for example, gives the vistas beyond the mill wheel to which water flowed under a dark arch. Behind, she could see the rendezvous area for the cattle drives and the rising slope with freshly shorn sheep. There is nothing much in the scene worth note, but almost instantly interest is given by the appearance of two cavalry soldiers on their horses, light catching on their accoutrement. Heavy boredom is transformed for Anne by the human figures. The importance of the human association in anything is referred to by Hardy in The Life where he notes that Hobbema's method "in his view of a road with formal

lopped trees and flat tame scenery . . . is that of infusing emotion into the baldest external objects either by the presence of a human figure among them, or by mark of some human connection with them."[44]

Something of that same idea can be traced in Hardy's poems, such as "After a Journey," "Beeny Cliff," and "At Castle Boterel," for example, where landscapes are not treated in the conventional "picturesque" way that Hardy did not agree with, but take on meaning only in terms of Emma's presence recalled, or their shared enjoyment remembered in that setting. There is an interesting combination of the human-figure-in-the-landscape with Hardy's observation of a Dutch landscape in The Woodlanders. Grace watches Fitzpiers, who has borrowed her white horse, as he winds through glorious autumn scenery into the distance and becomes "a mere speck . . . a Wouvermans eccentricity reduced to microscopic dimensions" (Chapter 28). Wouvermans is noted for his invariable inclusion of a white horse in his landscapes; and two paintings that Hardy might have seen at the Bethnal Green exhibition are "A Stream in Hilly Country," and "Afternoon Landscape, with a White Horse," sometimes called "By the Riverside."

Supreme among the names of successful English landscapists is that of J.M.W. Turner with whom Hardy had a special affinity; and it is to him that Alastair Smart draws attention with reference to Chapter XI of Far From the Madding Crowd.[45] There, Hardy describes the massing snowflakes

clothing the moor and the sky taking on the qualities of a cavern roof as it sinks down low as reminiscent of Turner's handling of snowstorms. It is Turner's use of colour, too, that one might see as an influence on Hardy's landscape description. With reference to "Calais Pier, the Arrival of the English Packet," Stanley Fisher notes that "the clear spaces of sky are cobalt blue, the storm clouds intense blue green, the sea a beautiful translucent green and the figures brightly coloured," and one recalls, perhaps, Bathsheba's distraught view of the sky in the chapter, "Fury," after Boldwood's jealous outburst:

> Above the dark margin of the earth appeared foreshores and promontories of coppery cloud, bounding a green and pellucid expanse in the western sky. Amaranthine glosses came over them then, and the unresting world wheeled her round to a contrasting prospect eastward, in the shape of indecisive and palpitating stars.

Such a Turneresque sky is described in The Woodlanders, too, and on another occasion that is heightened by emotion. Grace, having just recognized her husband's deception, turns homeward and meets Giles on the way. His wholesomeness and lack of veneer seem suddenly important to her so that an old familiarity between them is renewed. The sky in the west, towards which they move, is a landscape in itself,

> the eye journeying on under a species of golden arcades, and past fiery obstructions, fancied cairns, logan-stones, stalactites and stalagmite of topaz. Deeper than this their gaze passed thin flakes of incandescence, till it plunged into a bottomless medium of soft green fire. (Chapter 28)

That Hardy had looked hard at landscape paintings is evident from his specific references to them in his novels and

to the particular and distinguishing qualities he recognizes in them; but his descriptions of varying skies and of "realistic" details which his travellers observe or must contend with as they move across the Wessex scenery are suggestive of a deeper knowledge. I believe that here again Hardy's own keen eye and response to the Dorset landscapes of his youth and later years, and his genuine delight in the effects of sky lights probably account for the treatment they receive in his work. In particular, the fine descriptions of both Egdon Heath in The Return of the Native and the Vale of the Froom in Tess of the d'Urbervilles seem to show Hardy's own visual memories of landscape changes in all times and weathers.

In summary, then, it could be said that as far as the more superficial aspects of traditional nineteenth-century "pictorialism" are concerned, Hardy extended them considerably, making use of his interest in and knowledge of paintings, sculpture, and architecture. He also moved in the tradition of "pictorialism" indebted to the Dutch seventeenth-century genre paintings, to Hogarth and his successors, and to both Dutch and English landscape painters, but he was averse to what was merely "picturesque"; his "pictorialism," especially as it is used to portray lighting effects, and in landscape description, functions purposefully, often creating atmosphere or revealing the emotional state of a character. To all these aspects Hardy brought his own exceptional visual memory shaped by a rural Dorset upbringing.

CHAPTER III

PICTORIAL ASPECTS: NARRATIVE PAINTING, ENGRAVING AND PORTRAITS

There are other aspects of "pictorialism" discernible in Hardy's writing and they, too, can be seen as part of nineteenth-century literary traditions. The seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish genre painting, concerning itself with commonplace subject matter, developed also along narrative lines. Mankind has always loved a story and "There have been few periods in the past when narrative pictures of some kind were not being painted."[46] In some of the Dutch works the dividing line between what is simply a genre painting and what is a narrative genre is hard to establish. Sometimes the inclusion of a single detail moves the painting in question to an anecdotal position because that detail sets off speculations about what went before and what will happen after. Nicolas Maes' painting, "A Housewife at Work," for example, seems to throw all its emphasis on the women seated with her handwork at a window, but a young face at the casement and a certain exasperated gesture in the woman's hand immediately extend the picture to further meanings of the narrative kind. Teniers' work is of this sort often and so, too, are many of Gabriel Metsu's paintings. Typical instances would be "An Old Woman Asleep," where a cat quietly steals the fish from a platter at the woman's feet,

"The Sleeping Sportsman," and "The Letter-writer Surprised."[47]

Genre paintings, it has been stated already, were tremendously popular in England and developed their own following, and the narrative genre painting was part of this movement. Eighteenth-century painters like Francis Wheatley and George Morland often reveal an anecdotal quality in their rural paintings, but their work tends to stay within a "picturesque" tradition. Sir David Wilkie, however, at the dawn of the nineteenth century, Edward Bird, and William Mulready moved clearly into narrative concerns with paintings whose titles alone indicate the story-line content: "The Letter of Introduction," "Distraining for Rent," "Reading of the Will Concluded," and "The Wolf and the Lamb." The rise, in Victorian times, of an exceptionally great interest in narrative painting is only, in part, attributable to those painters who continued in the Dutch genre tradition. Something is owed also to the book illustrators. In particular E.M. Ward and C.R. Leslie, following the tradition of Hogarth, set a pattern with their scenes from The Vicar of Wakefield and Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme. These illustrators, Christopher Wood points out,

> first taught the Victorian public to equate painting with literature; taught them that a picture was something to be read, a novel in a rectangle. The artist became the story-teller, novelist, as well as painter. A picture had to tell a story by means of objects, clues, costumes, facial expressions, literary quotations; the spectator was invited to create a past and a future, as it were, outside the frame.[48]

Many of the narrative paintings exhibited at the Royal Academy and at the South Kensington Museum were of this kind, and in

addition the story told was sometimes moral, sometimes comic, and "more often still it was extremely pathetic."[49] Two considerable collections of narrative paintings at the South Kensington Museum are among the works Thomas Hardy would almost certainly have seen. The Sheepshanks' Bequest of 1857 is one of the most important collections of Victorian narrative paintings, while the Townshend Bequest of 1868 includes some parallel examples from the continent.

While there are examples, of course, in these narrative paintings of compositional techniques such as windows and doors used emphatically as "framing" devices, this area of influence on Hardy has received attention already. What seems important in considering Victorian narrative painting is the matter of subject and situation in relation to Hardy's work. It is possible to see in a number of episodes in his prose fiction, and to a lesser extent in his poetry, a thematic similarity with this or that picture. P.H. Calderon's painting, "Broken Vows," is an excellent example of the kind of parallel one might draw with Hardy's writing. The picture shows a young lady, her hand on her heart, her eyes closed, in the instant that she hears her betrothed in close conversation on the other side of the very fence where they had once carved their initials. The fence is just high enough to reveal the young man's head and through a hole a very comely, smiling face is glimpsed. The occasion is not only one of infidelity but also of "overhearing." Since such a situation was a stock one in plays, the inclusion of

instances of overhearing in Hardy's novels might well derive from his theatre visits. There were also at least two Dutch genre pictures on the same theme: "The Listening Servant" in the Townshend Collection and "The Listening Housewife" by Maes in the Bethnal Green Exhibition; but, whatever the main source of influence, it is interesting to note that Hardy quite often makes use of the idea. One instance in A Pair of Blue Eyes, however, comes very close to the Calderon painting. Stephen, returning to visit Elfride, unhappily witnesses her romantic meeting with Knight. The reader "sees" Stephen watching "a strongly illuminated picture":

> Their two foreheads were close together, almost touching, and both were looking down . . . his left arm being round her waist. Part of the scene reached Stephen's eyes through the horizontal bars of woodwork which crossed their forms like the ribs of a skeleton. (Chapter 25)

Hardy's presentation has all the ingredients of the Calderon situation and the addition of his own preference for slightly odd angles of looking.

Other instances of similarities with Victorian narrative paintings tend to be isolated examples rather than repeated motifs, and observations about them can be only of the most speculative kind. A Townshend Bequest painting, "An Offer of Marriage," by the Swiss artist Kunkler, shows a rustic, hat in hand, clearly spruced for the occasion, solemnly presenting his offer to a young lady of considerable poise, and one might recall Gabriel Oak arriving in a similar condition at the Everdene residence with the same purpose. Beyond the occasion, however, and a common tendency to gentle

amusement, the details of the painting are not repeated in Hardy's description. A.E. Mulready's paintings of scenes of life among the very poor are suggestive of a pictorially-presented description in Desperate Remedies:

> A few chairs and a table were the chief articles of furniture. . . . A roll of baby-linen lay on the floor; beside it a pap-clogged spoon and an overturned tin pap-cup. . . . A baby was crying against every chair-leg, the whole family of six or seven being small enough to be covered by a washing tub. (Chapter 16)

One might point, too, to Francis Danby's "Disappointed Love" which depicts a young girl bowed in dejection in a lonely grove. When Troy in Far From the Madding Crowd had declared to Bathsheba, "You are nothing to me," she sought refuge in a ferny, secluded spot of a similar kind. Once again the details of the painting and the description do not completely correspond, but the theme does, and it is a theme that had some significance in the work of the later nineteenth-century romantics. Eric Adams, discussing Danby's "Disappointed Love," finds parallels in other works where the effect of Darwin's evolutionary theories can be traced. He refers specifically to this instance in Hardy's novel where woman is "betrayed by the primitive instincts of the forest."[50]

What these apparent parallels suggest is that there was a taste for certain themes and that both painters and writers found material in them and borrowed from one another. Sir George Clausen, for example, with rural themes like "Building the Rick" and "Labourers after Dinner" (1884) was called "The Thomas Hardy of Painting,"[51] and Hardy, in his turn, with

his knowledge of the contemporary paintings, seems quite often to be thematically close to them. The subjects of death and funerals, quite obsessively interesting for the Victorians,[52] lie behind a number of paintings. Landseer's "The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner," and Sir Luke Fildes' "The Doctor" combine pathos with death as the dog, in the former, rests his loyal head on his master's coffin, and the doctor, in the latter, watches anxiously over the dying child. In La Thangue's "The Man with the Scythe" the same interest is there; the symbolic figure of death moves from the cottage gate as the mother realizes that her convalescent child propped in a garden chair has quietly died. "Home from Sea" captures the finality of the graveyard as a young sailor weeps over his loss in Arthur Hughes' painting. There is no shortage of death, dying, sickness and graves in Victorian narrative painting and there is no shortage of the same subjects in Hardy's fiction. Frequently he makes his own "narrative paintings" from the sombre subjects. Bathsheba weeping over the open coffin of Fanny and her child, or kneeling to pray beside it, are visualized moments of this kind (Chapter 43). So, too, is the tending of Fanny's grave by Troy; he hangs his lantern on a low yew-tree bough in Weatherbury churchyard and in the semi-darkness plants the flower-roots he has brought (Chapter 45). In Jude the Obscure the reader "sees" Jude, death not too far distant, collapsed against the milestone in driving rain ("At Christminster Again," Chapter 8). It is a brief moment but

visualized with the full pathos typical of the narrative paintings in question. Again, Grace, with Dr. Fitzpiers in attendance, is shown by the bedside of the feverish and dying Giles (Chapter 43). The examples are numerous, but perhaps the following passage from A Pair of Blue Eyes will serve to illustrate. The occasion follows Elfride's funeral:

> In the new niche of the crypt lay a rather new coffin, which had lost some of its lustre, and a newer coffin still, bright and untarnished in the slightest degree.
>
> Beside the latter was the dark form of a man, kneeling on the damp floor, his body flung across the coffin, his hands clasped, and his whole frame seemingly given up in utter abandonment to grief. (Chapter 40)

In the extravagance of "flung" and "utter abandonment" Hardy makes verbal the theatrical poses of some of the contemporary narrative paintings.

Although his poetry is less explicit in presenting such moments, a similar predilection for the typically Victorian subject can be found in abundance. A sampling of the poems offers "The Monument-Maker," which begins with a man taking his loved one's tombstone to her grave at night; or "The Sun's Last Look on the Country Girl," which shows ironic sunshine lighting the "face in the winding sheet." The first stanza of "A Last Journey" seems shaped as a painting: a child pulls back the curtains to let in the morning on a frail and dying father, and the pathos lies in the child's bright non-comprehension of the situation. Again, the reader would have no difficulty in finding many more such poems or stanzas that are in themselves sombre moments made verbal. One has the feeling that somewhere the situation has been painted by this

or that artist.

At a cheerful level, Joan Grundy says of Hardy's poem, "At a Railway Station, Upway," that it "seems asking to be painted, perhaps by Mulready,"[53] and in effect is acknowledging the same general similarity of subject matter with narrative paintings. It seems very probable that a Mulready could do justice to the picture of a small, violin-playing child charming a hand-cuffed convict to song as he waits for the train, and the constable smiling in spite of himself. The poem, "A Parting-Scene," is of this kind, too. In its description of the young soldier's farewell to wife and mother, it touches upon the subject area of Ford Madox Brown's "The Last of England" and narrative paintings that capture similar sad partings.

A further more generalized connection between Hardy's work and the narrative paintings is to be found in titles. "Too Late, Beloved!" was the original title of Tess of the d'Urbervilles[54] and it strikes a chord with W.L. Lindus' painting "Too Late." In details there is little correspondence beyond the return of a lover at a point in time which is ironically incapable of rectifying a sad situation, but it seems to suggest that the popular themes of the contemporary painters echoed in Hardy's memory. Joan Grundy draws attention to another correspondence here in the frequency of contrasting aspects of poems signified by titles like "First Sight of Her and After," "Before and After Summer," "Her Death and After," and so on.[55] Before and After,

Hogarth's series in the style of Marriage à la Mode, are forerunners of the companion-pieces in later narrative paintings. Augustus Leopold Egg's paintings in the "Past and Present" series are an excellent example of their kind. In three scenes the downfall of a woman, after her confession of infidelity to her husband, is traced, and a similarity in background details of the last two pictures makes an ironic comment: this kind of situation in the life of the mother will produce this kind of situation in the lives of her children. Hardy's poems do not necessarily have "scenes" to correspond to the "before" and "after" phases; sometimes the contrast lies merely in an ironic thought in the poet's mind. The speaker in "First Sight of Her and After" reflects as he journeys home from meeting his lover how wonderful the day has been, but as the moon rises and the shadows increase, he realizes ironically, from the very commonplace remarks of his fellow travellers, that it is his new experience only that has caused a difference in his perception of the day. In other poems there is a closer similarity to the narrative paintings and the content of the poems could be realized in terms of painted companion-pieces. "Then and Now," for example, contemplates contrasting conduct of warfare, and paintings, on the one hand of a knightly combat, and on the other of the mire and massacre of a First World-War battleground, could convey the poet's comment. Similarly, "Life and Death at Sunrise," by means of the repeated background details to establish a common present, could be interpreted in paint, the

first picture showing the unmoved hills at dawn as a death occurs, and the second showing the same silent witnesses to a joyous birth. "Where They Lived," "Former Beauties," "The Convergence of the Twain," and "Plena Timoris" are among the poems that could offer similar possibilities as either narrative paintings or as companion-pieces.

One last point might be made with reference to titles. The paintings are often accompanied by captions, sometimes explanatory, sometimes dramatic, and sometimes nudging the viewer towards a point of meaning he might otherwise miss. A random selection provides: "Woman's Mission--Bad News," "Fault on Both Sides," "The First Cloud," "An Anxious Hour," and "Hopeless Dawn." Not all Hardy's novels have chapter titles but his earlier ones do and the flavour of those headings is distinctly familiar. "At an Upper Window," "Mistress and Men," "The Alarm," "A Delicate Situation" and "Into Temptation" give some idea of the narrative-picture quality of many of his headings.

The development of photogravure and chromolithography in the nineteenth century made prints readily available and "Few Middle-class Victorian homes would have been without their quota of massively framed steel-engravings, reproducing . . . popular Academy pictures."[56] Among those narrative painters who found it lucrative to etch plates of their works were Wilkie, W.P. Frith, Millais, Holman Hunt, and of course Landseer, who came from an engraving family. This whole trend ensured that at least the upper and middle classes of

Hardy's readership were familiar with many of the contemporary paintings whether they had access to the art galleries or not. It is possible that Hardy consciously drew from themes and situations his readership would appreciate. It is equally possible that his constant gallery visits simply provided him with a number of memories that sprang easily to mind as he wrote. His practice of creating vividly visualized action, as if in his mind he watched a picture or a stage performance, would incline him towards the pictorial and the narratively pictorial in particular. Alastair Smart finds that Hardy was not "much in sympathy with his own times, least of all with what we now regard as typically Victorian art . . .",[57] but it would seem that he was influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by some aspects of Victorian narrative painting. One can point in particular to a general likeness in subject matter, to an occasional emphasis on the pathetic in a pictorially-presented "scene," to titles that clearly construct in the "now" and "then" fashion of the companion-pieces, and sometimes to poses and postures that parallel those of well-known paintings.

Beyond making accessible the popular Academy pictures, the development of print-making techniques contributed to and fostered a wider variety of illustrations in books and periodicals like The Quiver, The Graphic, and the Illustrated London News. Hardy was writing for a public increasingly in touch by means of these periodicals with the works of the peintres-graveur, so that it is not likely that his explicit

references to etchings would be lost upon the readers. In Far From the Madding Crowd Gabriel's perception of the coming storm is described: "Every hedge, bush, and tree was distinct as in a line engraving. . . . A poplar in the immediate foreground was like an ink stroke on burnished tin" (Chapter 37). Jude's impression of Sue's way of glancing is for him "something like that of the girls he had seen in engravings from paintings of the Spanish school" ("At Melchester," Chapter 1), and the stranger searching for Mrs. Charmond's house in The Woodlanders is seen "to have dark hair and a high forehead of the shape seen oftener in old prints and paintings than in real life" (Chapter 21). Generally, however, there is no specific reference to etching or engraving but there are occasions when the description seems to be emphasizing their qualities: line; black, white and grey gradations; silhouetted shape; and fine details. The hard winter in Tess of the d'Urbervilles suggests an engraving by Samuel Palmer or one that Myles Birket Foster might have offered in Birds, Bees and Blossoms (1858):

> Every twig was covered with a white nap as of fur grown from the rind during the night, giving it four times its usual stoutness; the whole bush or tree forming a staring sketch in white lines on the mournful gray of the sky and horizon. Cobwebs revealed their presence on sheds and walls where none had ever been observed till brought out into visibility by the crystallizing atmosphere, hanging like loops of white worsted from salient points of the out-houses, posts, and gates. (Chapter 43)

The quality of an engraving is caught again in Under the Greenwood Tree when Dick Dewy glances upward and

> the silver and black-stemmed birches . . . the pale

> grey boughs of beech, the dark-creviced elm, all appeared now as black and flat outlines upon the sky, wherein the white stars twinkled. . . . (Chapter 1)

Silhouetted people are numerous in Hardy's prose fiction and so, too, are his references to twigs and branches in outline. He was extremely sensitive to the way light shapes objects and throws them into relief when it illuminates from behind; and as much as he delighted in colour, he also responded to the withdrawal of it. It was the aspect he noted if one recalls the passage already quoted from The Life in which the landscape had changed from painting to engraving. Often, he gives the effect of finely-drawn black lines and shapes, but with the addition of a single background colour. In The Woodlanders, for example, Marty looks westward and sees against the sky

> the bare bough of a tree stretched horizontally, revealing every twig against the evening fire, and showing in dark profile every beck and movement of three pheasants that were settling themselves down on it in a row to roost. (Chapter 9)

This kind of simple pictorial starkness is also quite frequent in Hardy's novels, the sun or a fire providing the colour against which the black forms or lines are etched; but it occurs far less in his poems. In "The Darkling Thrush" he gives "The tangled bine-stems scored the sky / Like strings of broken lyres," but the suggestion of an etching, that the image contains in its emphasis on fine lines against the sky, is not developed further. Again, in "Snow in the Suburbs," the subject-matter seems translatable in terms of an etching because sufficient visual details of the snow's shaping action

are included. "Every branch big with it," "Every fork like a white web-foot," and the "black cat . . . wide-eyed and thin" moving up the "blanched slope" of the steps, depend for visual effect, as in an etching, on the contrast of light and dark. Joan Grundy has commented that in his poetry Hardy was less concerned with the reader-spectator elements and was more given up to self-expression.[58] This does not mean that the pictorial aspects are absent from his poems, however, only that they are less obtrusive.

The "pictorialism" that stems inevitably from presenting a character's external features verbally, that is, in making a pen-portrait, is as much part of Hardy's fiction as it is of any novelist's and to achieve that "painting" for the reader Hardy draws on a variety of impressions from both the visual and the literary arts. In some respects he is "not markedly more pictorial" than other nineteenth-century writers like Dickens and George Eliot.[59] He employs, for example, the traditional cataloguing of facial features; Fancy Day's "dark eyes" and "arched brows," and Grace Melbury's "well formed eyebrows" and "small delicate mouth" are little different from George Eliot's descriptions of this kind. Hetty in Adam Bede has "dark eyes" and "pouting lips" and Dinah in the same novel has "firmly pencilled" eyebrows and "a delicate nostril." Like George Eliot,[60] too, Hardy makes direct references to specific artists or paintings to carry or extend his comparisons. Elizabeth-Jane in The Mayor of Casterbridge has eyes "beaming with a long lingering light, as if Nature had

been advised by Correggio in their creation" (Chapter 16), and Angel Clare in Tess of the d'Urbervilles, returning from overseas, has shrunk in face so that he matches "Crivelli's dead Christus" (Chapter 53). There is no shortage of such instances.

Occasionally, Hardy seems to be drawing, consciously or unconsciously, on impressions from literature and the theatre. It is spring when Gabriel Oak makes Bathesheba his offer of marriage and he is portrayed in a "light waistcoat patterned all over with sprigs of an elegant flower" which calls appropriately to mind an earlier "lovyere and a lusty bacheler . . . Embrouded . . . Al ful of fresshe floures." Like Chaucer's young squire, Oak also plays the flute. Dante Gabriel Rossetti's "portrait" of the blessed damozel seems not too remote from the impression of Fancy Day in Under the Greenwood Tree looking out from her window to the carol-singers below. She wears a white robe and her hair falls richly around her shoulders as, lighted by her candle, she is framed in the window. The "other-worldly" effect is supported by tranter Dewy's comment, "As near a thing to a spiritual vision as I wish to see!" (Chapter 5). In quite a different vein, the description of Mrs. Charmond in The Woodlanders suggests Hardy had in mind a typical theatrical posture, aptly enough, for Mrs. Charmond has been a play-actress for a short while. Even to Fitzpiers as he enters, the "scene" is vaguely familiar as though he recalls its theatrical parallel perhaps:

by the light of the shaded lamp he saw a woman of elegant

> figure reclining on a couch in such a position as not to disturb a pile of magnificent hair on the crown of her head. A deep purple dressing-gown formed an admirable foil to the peculiarly rich brown of her hair plaits; her left arm, which was naked nearly up to the shoulder, was thrown upwards, and between the fingers of her right hand she held a cigarette, while she idly breathed from her delicately curled lips a thin stream of smoke towards the ceiling. (Chapter 26)

Although there is no record of all Hardy's theatre-going, it would be safe to suppose he saw, at least in his younger days in London, some of the more melodramatic plays. This supposition is strengthened by the description of Alec d'Urberville who has the "almost swarthy complexion," the "full lips . . . red and smooth," and the "well-groomed black moustache with curled points" of the arch-villain of melodrama, and to further this impression in his "portrait," there are his opening words to Tess that seem taken straight from a script: "Well, my Beauty, what can I do for you?" (Chapter 5). Henchard in The Mayor of Casterbridge, Manston in Desperate Remedies, and Fitzpiers in The Woodlanders have features very like those of Alec d'Urberville and suggest also the theatrical stamp but, lacking the tell-tale moustache, they stop short of melodrama. The common points are merely the foundations of the "portraits," each man, of course, being further developed along individual lines by additional features.

The influence of the seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish genre paintings on nineteenth-century fiction has been acknowledged already but it is worth a second glance in connection with Hardy's pen-portraits. In Under the Greenwood

Tree, the novel that carries the secondary title of A Rural Painting in the Dutch School, and in Far From the Madding Crowd, Hardy's humbler rustic characters are portrayed with interestingly uniform emphasis on earth-colours and the ruddy glow of health to be found in the Dutch genre paintings. The apple, also, which in its mellow ripeness seems to combine the colour and the suggestion of a wholesome earth-product, often figures beside the genre-painting quality to form the basis of the rustic "portraits." Old William Dewy, in Under the Greenwood Tree, has "a roughened bloom upon his face, which reminded gardeners of the sunny side of a ripe ribstone-pippin (Chapter 3). The aged maltster in Far From the Madding Crowd sits by the fire, "his frosty white hair and beard overgrowing his gnarled figure like the grey moss and lichen upon a leafless apple-tree" (Chapter 8). In the same novel, Maryann Money, with her "circular" face raises images "of a dried Normandy pippin," and "with her brown complexion, and the working wrapper of rusty linsey" has "the mellow hue of an old sketch in oils. . ." (Chapters 9 and 22). The more comely Liddy has a "perfection of hue" in the winter with "the softened ruddiness on a surface of high rotundity that we meet with in a Terburg or a Gerard Douw" (Chapter 9); and Tess forms a "cameo" picture as she milks Old Pretty, her profile and her "white curtain-bonnet" showing clearly against the "dun background of the cow" (Chapter 24). The closeness to the Dutch genre quality in these "portraits" is achieved by a painterly awareness of the glowing rust colours, and the

softened browns. Perhaps one of the outstanding "portraits" of the kind is that given of Old James in Under the Greenwood Tree:

> his stooping figure formed a well-illuminated picture as he passed towards the fire-place. Being by trade a mason, he wore a long linen apron reaching almost to his toes, corduroy breeches and gaiters, which together with his boots, graduated in tints of whitish-brown by constant friction against lime and stone. He also wore a very stiff fustian coat, having folds at the elbows and shoulders as unvarying in their arrangement as those in a pair of bellows: the ridges and the projecting parts of the coat collectively exhibiting a shade different from that of the hollows, which were lined with small ditch-like accumulations of stone and mortar-dust. . . . (Chapter 3)

If Hardy's humbler rustic "portraits" show often the strong influence of the Dutch and Flemish masters, the women characters are not so uniformly likened to one school. His wider comparisons, though not always explicit, reveal his knowledge and awareness of some of the essential qualities in a number of artists and schools. He is familiar with paintings of the typical, idealized Pre-Raphaelite woman, for example, whose willowy neck and cascading hair are to be found in the works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti and followers like Holman Hunt, Millais, and Ford Madox Brown. The "blessed damozel" likeness in Fancy Day's "portrait" is of this kind and the image appears again in Elfride's features in A Pair of Blue Eyes as she sings at the piano for Stephen. The candle-light behind her "forms the accidentally frizzled hair into a nebulous haze of light, surrounding her crown like an aureola" (Chapter 3). On occasions the allusion to the Pre-Raphaelite quality is slight; Cytherea in Desperate

Remedies is portrayed merely with the corn-yellow hair of the blessed damozel, and Grace in The Woodlanders, returning from her finishing-school with a new poise, has the suggestion of an aureola about her head as the fire gleams "through the loose hair about her temples as sunlight through a brake" (Chapter 5). It is her father who perceives her in this fashion and that is a masterly stroke for it is his wretched idealization of this daughter that contributes to her later sorrows.

The most complete "portrait" of the Pre-Raphaelite kind is to be found in Hardy's depiction of Eustacia Vye in The Return of the Native. Here, his "principal energies are devoted to evoking a grand, mysterious feminine figure."[61] She is

> full-limbed and somewhat heavy; without ruddiness, as without pallor; and soft to the touch as a cloud. To see her hair was to fancy that a whole winter did not contain darkness enough to form its shadow--it closed over her forehead like nightfall extinguishing the western glow. (Book I, Chapter 7)

Her eyes are "full of nocturnal mysteries" and her eyelids and lashes are heavy.

Eustacia is not entirely in the Rossetti style, however. In the lines of her mouth one might fancy "that such lip-curves were mostly lurking underground in the South as fragments of forgotten marbles." She has a goddess quality and

> The new moon behind her head, an old helmet upon it, a diadem of accidental dewdrops round her brow, would have been adjuncts sufficient to strike the note of Artemis, Athena, or Hera respectively, with as close an

> approximation to the antique as that which passes muster on many respected canvases.

Bathsheba Everdene, too, though lacking the classically-formed face, seems to be close to the "graceful and proportionate figure of eight heads" which is the classic ideal. In his visits to the museums, Hardy would have seen, at first hand, pieces of classical statuary and it is very probable he knew also the work of contemporary neo-classic painters like Lord Frederick Leighton, Sir Edward J. Poynter, and Albert Moore, the last noted for his studies made from the Elgin Marbles. Portraits were sometimes painted representing historical subjects, too, and a popular guise for a lady was as a Greek goddess or maiden. Sir Joshua Reynolds' portrait of the Montgomery sisters, "Mrs. Hale as 'Euphrosyne'," and "Miss Emily Pott as 'Thaïs'" are typical of the kind. It would seem, from the allusion Hardy makes in his short story, "Fellow-Townsmen," that he knew Reynolds' work in general. Barnet's wife, seen after she has nearly drowned, appears to have a complexion like "that seen in the numerous faded portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds . . . pallid in comparison with life. . . ." However, there is no evidence that Hardy saw the particular paintings cited above. Many of Reynolds' works were, and still are, in private hands; but there were exhibitions arranged. Beyond this there were some very fine mezzotints made of a number of his portraits; and these, published in 1865, might have been seen by Hardy.

A number of Hardy's women characters are described as if they are full-length "portraits." Bathsheba in "her new

riding-habit of myrtle green, which fitted her to the waist as a rind fits its fruit," has the elegance of a Reynolds' lady, and Elfride, too, in A Pair of Blue Eyes is described, as she stands "upon the edge of the terrace, close to the stone balustrade" like the portrait of the Countess of Harrington, for example.[62] Whistler seems to be the painter Hardy has in mind as he creates his "picture" of Tess, arrayed in the "airy fulness" of her white frock, her long hair freshly washed and tied with a ribbon. Whistler's "Symphony in White No. 2: The Little White Girl," painted in 1864 and enjoyed at the London Tate Gallery, might well have been Hardy's inspiration here.[63] The Whistler girl stands before a mirror and is reflected in it; Tess's mother hangs a black cloak over the outside of the cottage window and Tess, therefore, has also a mirror in her "portrait."

Another school of painting with which Hardy is familiar, the Impressionist, is evident in his "portrait" of Marty in The Woodlanders. Alastair Smart points out that the principles of French Impressionist painting were introduced to the public in England in 1886 when the New English Art Club was founded, and that Hardy, according to his entry in The Life, visited the Society of British Artists and had contact with Impressionism there in that year. In 1887 he published The Woodlanders and the "portrait" of Marty shows how "telling a use is made of one of the principal canons of Impressionist theory--that all forms lying outside the immediate focus of the gaze are inevitably blurred and indistinct, and that it is

therefore legitimate for the painter, having selected his focal point, to treat them as such. . . ."[64] The barber, seeking to purchase Marty's lovely hair to supplement Mrs. Charmond's scantier amount, arrives at night at Marty's cottage. From outside he looks in on the working Marty and

> In her present beholder's mind the scene formed by the girlish spar-maker composed itself into an impression-picture of extremist type; wherein the girl's hair alone, as the focus of observation, was depicted with intensity and distinctness, while her face, shoulders, hands, and figure in general were a blurred mass of unimportant detail lost in a haze and obscurity. (Chapter 2)

The same Impressionist effect, though not explicitly mentioned, is given in a "portrait" of young ladies enjoying a moment's freedom before the school-bell sounds, in "The High-School Lawn":

> Gray prinked with rose,
> White tipped with blue,
> Shoes with gay hose,
> Sleeves of chrome hue;
> Fluffed frills of white,
> Dark bordered light;
> Such shimmerings through
> Trees of emerald green are eyed
> This afternoon, from the road outside.

The poem is a fine example of Turner's method as Hardy understood it. In The Life, after a visit to the Royal Academy to see Turner's watercolours, he notes the Impressionist technique of giving "for that which cannot be reproduced a something else which shall have upon the spectator an approximative effect to that of the real."[65] The whirl of dainty, school-girl uniformed figures is rendered with a "shimmering" that suggests the "approximative effect" very well.

All Hardy's "portraits" reveal his sharp observation and the "painter's eye" with its concern for angles and tilts of the head, curves and lines, and posture. Ladies, in particular, it pleased him to study. In The Life he notes those he has seen at odd times, on a train, at a party, on a bus, while he is shopping. The entries occur after his novel-writing career has begun but it is not possible to say why he noted the ladies in question. Perhaps they were to be ideas for future characters; perhaps they were simply the observations of one whose interest centres also on the study of paintings. A girl on a train has a smile that does "not extend further than a finger-nail's breadth from the edge of her mouth: which is "very small, and her face not unlike that of a nymph." Another girl on the return journey he notes acutely has a sly humour, "the pupil of her eye being mostly half under the lid."[66] On May 29, 1889, he notes that a girl on a bus has a face "perfect in its softened classicality--a Greek face translated into English." So it is with his characters in his fiction; the details he points to are the result of considering faces carefully as if with a view to painting or modelling them. A study of Marty shows "the provisional curves of her childhood's face" forced "to a premature finality" (The Woodlanders, Chapter 2), and Elizabeth-Jane's face has a bone structure that is handsome although her immaturity holds her back from a corresponding handsomeness of the flesh (The Mayor of Casterbridge, Chapter 4). "Few men could have resisted the arch yet dignified

entreaty of the beautiful face, thrown a little back and sideways" says Hardy of Bathsheba Everdene (Chapter 41), and of Cytherea in Desperate Remedies he notes the particular turn of the head to look back over the shoulder, a posture he remembers from Greuze's "Head of a Girl" (Chapter 4). In Gabriel Oak's face "the curves of youth . . . tarried on to manhood" (Chapter 1), and Farfrae, studied by Elizabeth-Jane has cheeks "so truly curved as to be part of a globe," and she saw "how clearly drawn were the lids and lashes which hid his bent eyes" (Chapter 7). It is in such close observations that Hardy reveals perhaps how his natural disposition to look attentively has been shaped by the development of his later interests in the visual arts. When he says of Sue, in Jude the Obscure, that "a painter might not have called her handsome or beautiful" he describes his own stance; it is that of the artist.

Hardy's "portraits" are often memorable; they take on a vividness that cannot be attributed to a detailed and painterly description alone. The quality of life they possess is centred in the significance they have for the watcher in the story. Most of Hardy's characters are presented through the subjective appraisal not of the narrator but of another character in the manner of the dramatic monologue. The reader of the novel stands with the narrator behind the watcher and what is revealed to the reader has filtered through the subjective and often emotional response of the character-watcher. The watched "portrait" is alive and stimulates

response, and it becomes a subtle instrument by which the reader grasps also the revealing perceptions of the watcher himself. An excellent example of the process is to be found in Far From the Madding Crowd. Oak, twenty-eight and a bachelor, glances over a hedge at a yellow waggon descending the hill. While the waggoner returns to pick up the lost tail-board, Oak is able to observe the girl seated among the geraniums and the piled furniture. It is the awakened interest of a young bachelor in springtime that seems to be caught in the description of Bathsheba given on this occasion:

> the sun lighted up to a scarlet glow the crimson jacket she wore, and painted a soft lustre upon her bright face and dark hair. The myrtles, geraniums, and cactuses packed around her were fresh and green, and at such a leafless season they invested the whole concern of horses, waggon, furniture, and girl with a peculiar vernal charm. (Chapter 1)

Part of the vividness must come from the painterly quality, reminiscent perhaps of Francis Wheatley's subjects of colourful rural waggons, but much also depends on the natural awakening of interest in the bachelor-watcher in his parallel "leafless season." In view of the direction the novel's action takes, this presentation is clever. Further to the Gabriel-Bathsheba strand in the story, there is also the development of Bathsheba through many roles and stages. When Fanny Robin is missing and Bathsheba is the dignified mistress of a farm, she appears to her worried rustic workers as the possible saviour of the situation. Through their respectful eyes, the reader sees her at an upper window "robed in mystic white" (Chapter 8). A "portrait" of Boldwood later in the

story is coloured by Oak's sympathetic and admiring appraisal of the older man's dignified control in the face of his sorrow:

> He saw the square figure sitting erect upon the horse, the head turned to neither side, the elbows steady by the hips, the brim of the hat level and undisturbed in its onward glide, until the keen edges of Boldwood's shape sank by degrees over the hill. (Chapter 35)

The solidity and the immobility of the "portrait" emphasize Oak's approval besides representing Boldwood to the reader.

One last example is worth consideration from The Woodlanders, though such subjective "portraits" abound in the novels. Grace, understanding at last that Fitzpiers is acting with duplicity and visiting Mrs. Charmond, follows him suspiciously until he disappears, "a mere speck now . . . reduced to microscopic dimensions." His disappearance from the scene is not only physical; the reduction of his size is an estimation also of Grace's value of him and perhaps of his urban life-style, one that she has adopted in marrying him. Immediately after, Giles Winterborne appears and the "portrait" of him is memorable and significant:

> He looked and smelt like Autumn's very brother, his face being sunburnt to wheat-colour, his eyes blue as corn-flowers, his sleeves and leggings dyed with fruit-stains, his hands clammy with the sweet juice of apples, his hat sprinkled with pips, and everywhere about him that atmosphere of cider. . . . (Chapter 28)

Not only is this a rustic "portrait" with the Dutch genre quality and allusions again to apples, but it is also a measure of Grace's revaluation of the country wholesomeness and naturalness her schooling has distanced her from. Giles here, the "breath of Autumn's being," takes on a heightened

attractiveness and desirability in the instant of Grace's realization of her loss.

It may well be that in "painting" verbal portraits, Hardy simply moves in the nineteenth-century tradition, but his method is more complex than might at first appear. He employs techniques to be found in other writers of his time, but he reveals also a knowledge and awareness of the essential qualities in the work of individual artists and in various schools of painting. His presentation of "portraits" through the subjective perception of another character often works subtly to acquaint the reader with that character's psychological state, and to make thematic links of a significant kind. Such "portraits" are frequently vivid and memorable.

CHAPTER IV

"A WAY OF LOOKING"

The subject of Hardy's "pictorialism" is by no means exhausted when an examination of his prose fiction and poetry has revealed the various strands of the visual arts that have contributed to and influenced its complexity. Nor is it adequate to conclude only that Hardy wrote in the nineteenth-century literary tradition, with perhaps greater emphasis on painterly qualities because of his knowledge of and life-long interest in the visual arts. There remains an aspect of Hardy's "pictorialism" that is essentially his alone, an idiosyncratic mode of vision that has roots in his early years, and that has shaped the creative expression of his view of man in the world.

Reference has been made already to Hardy's childhood response to music, and to his being moved to tears by several tunes his father played on the violin. To conceal those tears, Hardy would dance; and it is in that dancing that J. Hillis Miller traces the early signs of Hardy's channelling of his emotions by means of "a transposition of the helpless and self-betraying tears into a more or less impersonal and socially accepted form of behaviour." He sees the same sort of process at work when the young Hardy expresses his delight at the sunlight on the red wall by means of a recitation of an appropriate hymn. It is "a way of being involved in the

world and of responding to it without being swallowed up by it. . . . The experience is accepted and yet held at arm's length through its change into the objective form of a work of art."[67] Control is achieved, suggests Miller, by the "distancing" that occurs as the mind remains separately conscious in the experience. Whether this separateness was more comfortable for Hardy, enabling him to deal with excessive emotional response, or whether he derived pleasure from it because it afforded him opportunities to exercise his creative powers in a richly imaginative way, one cannot say with any certainty; but it is clear that in his account of these childhood responses, Hardy is offering glimpses of what later becomes his habitual stance, a detached, watchful one. Miller points out that

> the spontaneous withdrawal of the mind to a position of detached watchfulness is ratified by an act of will. Rather than choosing to lose himself in one or another of the beguiling forms of engagement offered by the world, Hardy . . . chooses to keep his distance.[68]

This is the position of a spectator, and it is one that characterizes Hardy's stance as narrator, and that of many of his characters. They are watchers. There are, however, other factors that might contribute to Hardy's preference for this kind of narrative stance in his fiction and poems.

At the time in which Hardy was writing, there was great interest in the subject of perception and the eye's ability to see only objectively. In 1865, under the date August 23rd, he writes in The Life: "The poetry of a scene varies with the minds of the perceivers. Indeed, it does not lie in the scene

at all." Tom Paulin draws attention to this entry in connection with Hume's theory that the human mind is the sum of its memories and perceptions. He points out that although Hardy may not have read Hume before the 1870's, he had read Bagehot's essay on Shelley, which gives a very full account of Shelley's response to Hume; and that the entry in The Life shows Hardy to be aligning himself with Shelley's position on the subject of perception. Paulin suggests also that Hardy's many references to eyes might, in part, be accounted for by such philosophical interests.[69] An article by George O. Marshall Jr., in the Colby Library Quarterly, indicates that Hardy's references to eyes are, indeed, numerous. At least 246 occur in his poems, and a random sampling of his novels shows, for example, 176 in A Pair of Blue Eyes, 171 in The Return of the Native, and 190 in Tess of the d'Urbervilles.[70] It seems reasonable to suppose that both Hardy's own, habitual, detached view, and his philosophical interest in the subject of perception, contributed to his narrative stance as a spectator.

Two further possible sources of influence on this stance lie in his rural upbringing and family life. His paternal grandmother, Mary Head Hardy (1772-1857), lived with the family in Bockhampton; and she, and Hardy's own mother, Jemima Hand Hardy, were rich in stories and legends, which they passed on in the strong oral tradition of the time. Of his mother, Hardy records: "She had been a woman with an extraordinary store of local memories, reaching back to the days when the

ancient ballads were everywhere heard at country feasts, in weaving shops, and at spinning wheels."[71] His grandmother's ability to recall the past is celebrated in a poem about her, "One We Knew." A sub-heading, (M.H.1772-1857), clearly identifies her as the story-teller in the poem:

> With cap-framed face and long gaze into the embers--
> We seated around her knees--
> She would dwell on such dead themes, not as one who remembers,
> But rather as one who sees.
>
> She seemed one left behind of a band gone distant
> So far no tongue could hail.
> Past things retold were to her as things existent,
> Things present but as a tale.[72]

In his most impressionable years, Hardy was exposed to this vivid and dramatic kind of story-telling. He may well have retained a sense of the "conjuring up" of events before the mind's eye, of creating events to exist again in that moment. Such a technique would involve the narrator in "seeing" in the present, as the story unfolds, just as much as it would the listener. As a possible source of influence, this family tradition cannot be ignored.

Robert Gittings refers to another fairly regular occurrence in the family's routine that might also have had some bearing on Hardy's later preference for a narrative stance as the observer. This was the Sunday walk with his parents, on which occasion the family telescope would be taken along. They would climb the slope that led to "the tumulus group known as Rainbarrows," and "Hardy's father would take a sweeping view with the telescope he always carried, and point out landmarks. . . . This habit of taking a bird's eye view

of the whole area, stayed with Hardy all his life. . . ."[73] The observation from a distance, the habitual, detached watchfulness, the imaginative "seeing" in family story telling, and the later interest in eyes and theories of perception--all these seem to have played some part in the formation of Hardy's idiosyncratic mode of vision.

Essentially, this mode is a predilection for a variety of ways of looking as a spectator. The effect on Hardy's "pictorialism" is to bring to it distinctive qualities that arise not so much from what is viewed, as from the position of the spectator, or from the angle of his looking, and often from the revealing of his attitude of mind. Several entries in The Life indicate Hardy's appreciation of the fact that the unusual view might be considered a viable method of stimulating interest. He notes, under the date 1890, March-April: "Art consists in so depicting the common events of life as to bring out the features which illustrate the author's idiosyncratic mode of regard; making old incidents and things seem as new." It is this different way of looking that seems to impress him when he sees Gérôme's painting, "Jerusalem," at the Royal Academy in 1870. He records: "The shadows only of the three crucified ones are seen. A fine conception." Years later, in March, 1888, he is reminded of this same painting. He writes:

> At the Temperance Hotel. The people who stay here appear to include religious enthusiasts of all sorts. They talk the old faiths with such new fervours and original aspects that such faiths seem again arresting. They open fresh views of Christianity by

> turning it in reverse positions, as Gérôme the painter did by painting the shadow of the Crucifixion instead of the Crucifixion itself as former painters had done.

In one further example from The Life, Hardy reveals his continuing interest in the odd but effective angle. Under the date 1891, April 28th, he offers a whimsical thought on the subject: "If I were a painter, I would paint a picture of a room as viewed by a mouse from a chink under the skirting."

In his prose fiction and his poetry, Hardy employs a spectator stance from an unusual angle sufficiently often for it to be recognized as a distinctive feature of his writing. Two poems that illustrate by their differences exactly how Hardy might place effective emphasis on the spectator's position are "A Spellbound Palace," a description of Hampton Court, and "Last Week in October." The former poem offers simply what is seen by an artistic eye looking keenly at the old building: the "low-travelling winter sun"; and the "depths of the yews/ . . . vague with misty blues; the "spires of shadow" lying across the pathways; and the "fired vermilion" of the sunlight on the ancient brick. What is offered in this painterly description is one aspect of Hardy's "pictorialism": the presence of a spectator before a "picture," noting the various details that are composed to form it. The latter poem captures the same aspect of Hardy's "pictorialism," but in addition the reader is aware of an unusual shift in the spectator's view-point. In the first stanza the "eye" watches the trees flinging down their leaves "here, there, another and another, still and still." The second stanza,

however, arrests the random looking, and fixes upon a single leaf:

> A spider's web has caught one while downcoming,
> That stays there dangling when the rest pass on;
> Like a suspended criminal hangs he, mumming
> In golden garb, while one yet green, high yon,
> Trembles, as fearing such a fate for himself anon.

Almost imperceptibly, the point of view shifts in the final two lines as the spectator sees through the "eyes," or from the position of the green leaf. This awareness of the "picture" of the suspended dead leaf from a different and additional stance reveals an irony present in the spectator's mind.

A similar example in Hardy's prose fiction is to be found in Tess of the d'Urbervilles. At first the spectator-narrator's eye sweeps generally over the "picture." It is milking time and the red and white herd plods slowly to the sheds with Tess following in its rear. He reflects that it is a scene that has been enacted by "infinite cows and calves of bygone years" that have rubbed the wooden posts "to a glossy smoothness." Inside the shed, the "picture" is presented from an unusual angle:

> Between the posts . . . ranged the milchers, each exhibiting herself at the present moment to a whimsical eye in the rear as a circle on two stalks, down the centre of which a switch moved pendulum-wise. . . .

The comic reduction of the cows to caricatures, by the odd angle of viewing, is redeemed almost at once as the spectator views not the cows, but their shadows, and notes that the sun draws them on the wall

> with as much care over each contour as if it had been the profile of a Court beauty on a palace wall; copied them as diligently as it had copied Olympian shapes on marble façades long ago, or the outline of Alexander, Caesar, and the Pharaohs. (Chapter 16)

The odd angle of looking is important, for in the move from the comic rear ends to the fine wall-shadows, the reader becomes aware of the spectator's attitude. He seems to appreciate the ironic neutrality of the ageless sun that witnesses the comings and goings of the famous figures and of the farmyard cows. "Pictorially," of course, in both the example from his poetry and the one from Tess, at least two pictures, placed in close juxtaposition, would be needed to convey the irony in a non-verbal form.

Hardy's natural tendency to note the odd angle of viewing is referred to in The Life. He recounts how, "As was the case with Hardy almost always, a strange bizarre effect was noticed by him at the Moulin Rouge."[74] He observed the ironic juxtaposition of the lively cancan dancers on the stage and the graves of the Montmartre cemetery clearly visible through a back window. Many years earlier, attending a First-Aid lecture, he had made another observation of this kind. The skeleton used for teaching had dangled before the window, and beyond, Hardy saw the little figures of children dancing outside to band music.[75] In a passage already referred to in A Pair of Blue Eyes, it will perhaps be remembered that Stephen, the spectator in the scene, watched Knight and Elfride "through the horizontal bars of woodwork, which crossed their forms like the ribs of a skeleton" (Chapter 25). The

odd angle of viewing, as through a skeleton, in this instance foreshadows the death of his relationship with Elfride.

Occasionally, the angle from which the viewer looks produces humour in the "pictorialism." In Under the Greenwood Tree, the vicar, having been on his knees to retrieve a fallen pen, rises and lifts his eyes to the doorway where, suddenly, drawn there by curiosity, appear the rest of the "ancient body of minstrels." His gaze catches them in the instant of their peering in:

> Mr. Penny in full-length portraiture, Mail's face and shoulders above Mr. Penny's Head, Spink's forehead and eyes over Mail's crown, and a fractional part of Bowman's countenance under Spinks's arm--crescent-shaped portions of other heads and faces being visible behind these--the whole dozen and odd eyes bristling with eager enquiry. (Chapter 4)

The "picture" has about it the well-rehearsed, split-second timing of an end-of-scene comedy pose in the instant the "fast curtain" is dropped. The reader's appreciation of the comedy is dependent, as an audience's would be, on recognition of the unexpectedness of the group's arrival from the point of view of the vicar. Hardy employs a somewhat similar view of Miller Loveday's neighbours as they gather in his doorway to share in the reading of his newly-arrived letter. The Miller looks up and finds the doorway filled by persons "partly covering each other like a hand of cards, yet each showing a large enough piece of himself for identification" (Chapter 14).

Another distinctive quality in Hardy's "pictorialism" is produced by a narrator's stance either before action that unfolds in the instant he "looks," or before action that he

relives vividly, "seeing again" in the manner, perhaps, of Mary Head Hardy. Both presentations are reminiscent of the relationship between audience and actors; and the spectator's attention dwells, as it would in the case of a static "picture," on considerations of lighting, position, grouping, posture, and so on, which are, after all, as much the property of any stage production. A passage in Tess of the d'Urbervilles illustrates well the sense of the spectator before an actual performance.

> This morning the eye returns involuntarily to the girl in the pink cotton jacket, she being the most flexuous and finely drawn of them all. But her bonnet is pulled so far over her brow that none of her face is disclosed while she binds, though her complexion may be guessed from a stray twine or two of dark brown hair. . . . Her binding proceeds with clock-like monotony. From the sheaf last finished she draws a handful of ears, patting their tops with her left palm to bring them even. . . . (Chapter 14)

It is a "gallery painting" of a field worker that is looked at, except that it comes to life and the action continues as it would on a theatre stage. Hardy is not merely describing what he imagines; the scene from Tess's life "becomes a self-subsistent thing, a physical object whose essential property is the capacity for being looked at. . . ."[76]

The vividness with which the spectator-narrator recalls a "scene" into being, and having recalled it, looks at it as if it exists, is illustrated, for example, in Far From the Madding Crowd when Fanny is outside the barracks in the snow:

> The scene was a public path, bordered on the left hand side by a river, behind which rose a high wall. On the right was a tract of land, partly meadow and partly

> moor, reaching, at its remote verge, to a wide undulating upland. . . . If anything could be darker than the sky, it was the wall, and if anything could be gloomier than the wall it was the river beneath. . . . about this hour the snow abated. . . . Not long after a form moved by the brink of the river.
>
> By its outline upon the colourless background, a close observer might have seen that it was small. This was all that was positively discoverable, though it seemed human. . . . (Chapter 11)

Despite the fact that the scene is in the past, the narrator does not become omniscient; he "re-sees" with speculative eyes as on the occasion of a first watching. Fitzpiers' attendance on the crazed Mr. South in The Woodlanders emphasizes this same quality:

> Mr. Fitzpiers entered the sick chamber as a doctor is wont to do on such occasions . . . looking round towards the patient with a preoccupied gaze which so plainly reveals that he has well-nigh forgotten all about the case. . . . That quick, glittering, empirical eye, sharp for the surface of things if for nothing beneath, he had not. But whether his apparent depth of vision were real, or only an artistic accident of his corporeal moulding, nothing but his deeds could reveal. . . . (Chapter 14, my italics)

The spectator before this "scene" which, in its full form, includes not only the doctor's entrance and action but also a "portrait" of him, is clearly "reading" from what he "sees" without omniscience. Such a limitation as that offered in both the examples above increases the sense of the narrator's stance before a "scene" whether of the kind to be found upon the stage, or to be seen in a picture gallery. An example of the latter kind is illustrated in the poem, "Midnight on the Great Western," in which the narrator "sees," or "recalls" vividly to mind a picture:

In the third-class seat sat the journeying boy,
And the roof-lamp's oily flame
Played down on his listless form and face,
Bewrapt past knowing to what he was going,
Or whence he came.

In the band of his hat the journeying boy
Had a ticket stuck; and a string
Around his neck bore the key of his box,
That twinkled gleams of the lamp's sad beams
Like a living thing.

The poem's final stanzas make clear the presence of the spectator and the speculative nature of his looking at this very "real" image that he has recalled: What "sphere," above the "rude realms" we live in, do you have knowledge of, that brings you such calmness? "What past can be yours, O journeying boy. . . ?" he questions.

Perhaps the most distinctive quality that is brought to Hardy's "pictorialism" by his idiosyncratic mode of vision is the sense of "distancing" that occurs in a variety of ways. To a certain extent, of course, whether the observer is the narrator or a character, each time the view point is that of a spectator there is, inevitably, a separateness of the kind to be found between an audience and actors, or between viewers and works of visual art. All the examples discussed above have some such "distancing." It is to be found, also, in a number of Hardy's poems. Samuel Hynes notes the audience-actor relationship in poems where "the speaking voice is the ironic observer, who records what he said and what she said" in scenes that involve "figures in a landscape, meeting, speaking, parting, returning."[77] "A Hurried Meeting" offers "pictorially" a landscape by moonlight in which a woman and a

man are observed meeting, and are heard exchanging conversation. Their sad parting completed, the ironic observer's comment is conveyed in the mimicry of the night-jar. "Love is a terrible thing: sweet for a space,/And then all mourning, mourning!" it seems to say. "The Harbour Bridge" presents with "pictorial" vividness another sad pair meeting, exchanging words, and parting. Again, the ironic observer's voice is heard:

> They go different ways.
> And the west dims, and yellow lamplights shine:
> And soon above, like lamps more opaline,
> White stars ghost forth, that care not for men's wives,
> Or any other lives.

"In Sherborne Abbey" and "A Parting Scene" are among other poems that are presented in this way.

The same kind of "distancing" is achieved when characters in the prose fiction or poem are the watchers. Then, however, because the watching is frequently more purposeful, the result is often a kind of spying, or, at least, a concealed and secretive watching. In The Woodlanders, Giles, watching for Grace to pass along the road, becomes aware of another man who is watching from over the hedge on the opposite side. The stranger is "quizzing" Grace "through an eyeglass" which he lets fall when he realizes that he is observed (Chapter 8). "Pictorially," the scene has amusing narrative qualities as each spies quietly on the other. A similar pattern is used in Desperate Remedies when no fewer than four characters pursue one another, each moving tensely in the cloud-covered moonlight. As Hardy introduces one after

another of the watchers, the scene is at first more akin to a farcical situation acted out on an enormous stage; but he adds a further watcher, and suddenly the whole is reduced to a manageable scene "painted" on the park's surface:

> Night herself seemed to have become a watcher.
> The four persons proceeded across the glade . . . at equi-distances of about seventy yards. Here the ground, completely overhung by the foliage, was coated with a thick moss which was as soft as velvet beneath their feet. (Chapter 19, Parts 5 and 6)

A strange kind of "spying" is to be found in The Woodlanders when Grace is admitted to a room to await Fitzpiers' return. He is, in fact, asleep on the couch as she discovers to her surprise. Before moving to the bell-pull by the mirror, she studies his features; and then, in the act of pulling the bell-cord, she sees in the mirror that his eyes are open and gazing apparently at her (Chapter 18). The scene is "pictorial," but to convey it adequately a series of pictures would be necessary in the manner, perhaps, of the strip cartoon, or of "frames" in a film. The reader becomes like night in the previous example: a witness to an odd little scene of "spying." A poem that conveys a similar "picture" is "Seen by Waits." Christmas minstrels stand violing in the snow outside a manor house; and glancing up at a window, they see in a mirror the lady of the house "airily dancing,/Deeming her movements screened." There is no shortage in Hardy's works of characters peering in on others, or observing them surreptitiously from a safe darkness.

Because the telescope is an excellent instrument for "spying" and for keeping a distance, it is almost inevitable

that Hardy should make fictional use of it, especially since he would have personal memories of the part it played in family walks on Sundays. In A Pair of Blue Eyes he whimsically presents a "double spying." Elfride, carrying the heavy telescope to watch for Stephen's arrival by steamer, meets Knight unexpectedly on the cliff; and he, because the glass is heavy, examines the approaching steamer and reports to Elfride. The "scene" is amusing but full of tension. Knight examines the figures on deck only to find a figure on deck "spying" on them. As Elfride knows, it is Stephen: and her unchaperoned presence on the lonely cliff with Knight will take some explaining (Chapter 21). "Pictorially," the scene has narrative possibilities as "spy" is again "spied upon."

A final example of "distancing" by presentation of a character "spying" on another comes from Far From the Madding Crowd. It is a particularly interesting example for it combines a number of the special features of Hardy's "pictorialism." Gabriel Oak approaches a light in the darkness and finds it to be coming from crevices in a roof that is almost level with the ground, because the whole structure is built into the slope of the hill. "Leaning down upon the roof, and putting his eye close to a hole, he could see into the interior clearly." What Gabriel sees is the young and graceful Bathsheba, her aunt, two cows and steaming bran in a bucket. He sees Bathsheba "in a bird's eye view, as Milton's Satan first saw Paradise" (Chapter 2). The occasion combines the "distancing" of the character from what he views,

the unusual angle of viewing that Hardy quite often chooses, and an ironic sense of the gulf that will separate Oak from the "Paradise" of Bathsheba's company.

It is the sense of "distancing" that ultimately in Hardy's "pictorialism" presents the reader with Hardy's view of man in the universe. The observer's view-point moves out, and he "sees" from a great height so that characters are reduced in size and, ironically, in importance, too. Then, "all the world's a stage," and man becomes a temporary actor in a long perspective of time. Tess is seen travelling across the landscape, for example; and while she looks from the higher land, down upon the "Valley of the Great Dairies," and sees "myriads of cows" in a "bird's-eye perspective," she, in her turn, is seen by the observer as "a fly on a billiard-table of indefinite length, and of no more consequence to the surroundings than that fly (Chapter 16). In the story "On the Western Circuit," the people in the smoky glare of the circus ground are reduced in size and are without individuality as "more or less in profile," they dart "athwart and across, up, down, and around, like gnats against a sunset."[78] A sense of the passage of time is conveyed by the spectator's distant stance in Far From the Madding Crowd as he regards the "scene" of the kneeling shearers against the mellowed beauty of the old barn (Chapter 22). Here, at least, there is no irony. The observer approves the present "actors" with their slow-changing ways, which he sees as being in harmony with the four hundred years of the great barn

His distance enables him to span the years so that the present "picture" is superimposed on numberless previous scenes.

It is in The Dynasts that perhaps the most "distanced" view is to be found. Hardy presents, in the preliminary "Dumb Shows" before several scenes, views so distant that armies are "discerned in a creeping progress" of "thin long columns" that "serpentine along the roads" (II,II,i); or "the huge procession on the brown road looks no more than a file of ants crawling along a strip of garden-matting (II,V,V): or the "Innumerable human figures are busying themselves like cheese-mites all along the northernmost frontage" (II,VI,i); these insect-like multitudes, watched by an "unmoved" sun in their crawling movement over Europe, convey "pictorially," on a vast canvas, the futile preoccupations of the Napoleonic campaigns; and, implicitly, the relative insignificance of man in the universe.

In The Life, under the date January 1926, Hardy indicates his reluctance to sit on committees that control or direct the activities of others; he chooses, rather, to be "the man with the watching eye." Such a stance, with its roots in his natural disposition, is part of his entire life, and the shaping force in his "pictorialism"; but the total complexity of his "pictorialism" is formed from more than this. It develops from an amalgam of a nineteenth-century literary tradition, a life-long interest in the visual arts, an idiosyncratic mode of vision, and an eye that is, artistically, acutely sensitive.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Norman Page, Thomas Hardy (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 36.

[2]F.E. Hardy, The Life of Thomas Hardy (London: Macmillan, 1962), p. 15. All further references to this work are given as The Life.

[3]The Life, p. 167.

[4]The Life, p. 125.

[5]The Life, p. 21.

[6]The Life, p. 15.

[7]J. Hillis Miller, Thomas Hardy: Distance and Desire (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 3-9.

[8]The Life, p. 48.

[9]The Life, p. 41.

[10]The Life, p. 52.

[11]The Life, p. 57.

[12]Mario Praz, The Hero in Eclipse in Victorian Fiction (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1956), p. 28.

[13]Norman Page, p. 5.

[14]Derived from Horace's Ars Poetica 361, the phrase, ut pictura poesis ("as a painting, so a poem"), refers in criticism to the theoretical consideration of the two arts in relationship. See Jean H. Hagstrum, The Sister Arts.

[15]The Life, p. 300.

[16]The Life, p. 301.

[17]Thomas Hardy, "The Profitable Reading of Fiction," Life and Art, introd. Ernest Brennecke, Jr. (1925; rpt. New York: Libraries Press, 1968), p. 68.

[18]The Life, p. 229.

[19]Norman Page, Thomas Hardy, p. 70.

[20]Laurence Lerner and John Holmstrom, ed. Thomas Hardy and His Readers (London: Bodley Head, 1968), p. 60.

[21]Joan Grundy, Hardy and the Sister Arts (London: (Macmillan, 1979), p. 19.

[22]Norman Page, p. 66.

[23]Michael Millgate, Thomas Hardy: His Career as a Novelist (New York: Random House, 1971), p. 42.

[24]Laurence Lerner, p. 16.

[25]Norman Page, p. 68.

[26]Norman Page, p. 66.

[27]Richard H. Taylor, The Personal Notebooks of Thomas Hardy (London: Macmillan, 1978), p. XIX.

[28]See, for example, item P407, Wallace Collection Catalogues: Pictures and Drawings (London: Clowes and Sons, 1968), p. 132.

[29]Wallace Collection Catalogues, p. 134.

[30]Mario Praz, The Hero in Eclipse in Victorian Fiction (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1956), p. 1.

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